

**Licentiate Thesis**  
**Lisensiaatin tutkielma**  
**Avhandling av licentiate**

**GOD'S IMPASSIBILITY IN THEODORET OF CYRUS'  
COMMENTARIES ON THE PAULINE LETTERS**

**Juha Karhulahti**

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| Faculty - Tiedekunta - Fakultet<br>Theological faculty - teologinen<br>tiedekunta – Teologiska fakulteten                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                        | Department - Laitos - Institution<br>Department of Systematic Theology<br>Systemaattisen teologian laitos – Institution av<br>systematisk teologi |  |
| Author - Tekijä - Författare<br>Juha Karhulahti                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| Title of work - Työn nimi - Arbetets titel<br><br><b>GOD'S IMPASSIBILITY IN THEODORET OF CYRUS' COMMENTARIES ON<br/>THE PAULINE LETTERS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| Discipline - Oppiaine - Läroämne<br>Dogmatics – Dogmatiikka - Dogmatik                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| Type of work - Työn laji - Arbetets<br>art<br>Licentiate Thesis– Licensiaatin<br>tutkielma – Avhandling av licentiate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Date - Aika -<br>Datum<br>October 2020 | Pages - Sivumäärä - Sidoantal<br>204                                                                                                              |  |
| Abstract - Tiivistelmä - Referat<br><br>Theodoret of Cyrus lived from AD 393 to c. 453. He was one of the Fathers of the eastern Church and the bishop of Cyrus. He was raised in the Antiochian tradition. This study focuses on his Antiochian Christology in order to present his doctrine of God's impassibility (ἀπάθεια). His doctrine of God's impassibility reveals his concept of God's capability to have emotions and God's capability to be affected or not affected by someone else. In addition, it reveals the very core of his concept of the relationship of the two natures of Christ. The study also provides important information for understanding Theodoret's position in the Christological debates before the council of Chalcedon in 451.<br><br>There were many sources from which theologians could build their Christological presentations at the time. Philosophical backgrounds also influenced theological work, although their significance has been overestimated in research of later times. Rather, the Christian biblical tradition seems to prevail in the Christological presentation of the Fathers. This study will indicate this fact also.<br><br>As a highly esteemed Antiochian theologian, Theodoret of Cyrus defended "two nature" Christology. This form of Christology emphasised the difference between Christ's divine and human nature. In its extremity, two nature Christology was even claimed to have "two |                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |  |

subjects” (ὁ Λόγος and ὁ ἄνθρωπος) ‘the divine Word and the human man’ in Christ. This claim was actually made against Antiochian theologians usually from the competing school of Alexandria, which was bent towards asserting “one nature” Christology, according to which Christ’s divine nature (ὁ Λόγος) assumed a human body (τὸ σῶμα), and the Word (ὁ Λόγος) was the unquestionable subject of Christ.

For this study, I have systematically analysed Theodoret’s work in his ‘Commentary on Pauline letters’. First, I present Theodoret’s terminology and exegetical methods. Second, I present his early Christology as a guide for other scholars. This is necessary in order to indicate the evolution in Theodoret’s Christology. My study proves that Theodoret, together with other orthodox theologians of the time, developed his Christology leading up to Chalcedonian structure. The result was that the real subject in Christ was crystalized into his person, “The Ruler Christ”, who dominated over his two natures. “The Ruler Christ” executed God’s divine plan through the natures and according to their properties. Theodoret associated suffering and all human limitations to Christ’s human nature, although the divine nature was also present in every event of Christ’s human life. Still, the divine nature was not affected in any way; on the contrary, it remained immutable, impassible and eternal. However, in the process, the divine nature was able to have emotions in the same manner as God has emotions in his good guidance.

Third, I propose that the relationship of the two natures of Christ is indicated in Theodoret’s ‘Commentary on Pauline letters’ by using biblical names. Theodoret is careful when expressing the communication of properties between the two natures (*communicatio idiomatum*) neither to deny the Antiochian view of the difference between the two natures nor to deny the Alexandrian view of the unity in Christ. He eagerly employed unifying names (*communicatio onomaton*). Through names, Theodoret is able to present the ontological union of natures in Christ’s person. When it comes to God’s ἀπάθεια, he indicates through names that God, though divine, was present in passible events whilst being impassible. In the last chapter, I present Theodoret’s main arguments on God’s impassibility by using both his Christology and soteriology as well as his anthropology.

To conclude, my study presents Theodoret of Cyrus as one of the Chalcedonian theologians. He represents Antiochian “two nature” Christology in its orthodox form. During a very tense time for the Church, he found the method of *communicatio onomaton* as a peaceful

way to take part in discussions not only with his own tradition but also with other schools. In his biblical interpretation, he managed to present God as emotional, loving and immanent as well as being eternally immutable and impassible due to his divine nature.

Key words - Avainsanat - Nyckelord

Theodoret of Cyrus, Antiochian school, two nature Christology, God's impassibility (*ἀπάθεια*)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The Life and Contribution of Theodoret of Cyrus

Theodoret of Cyrus was born in Antioch in 393. After many years of barrenness, over which they received many prayers and prophesies, his parents experienced the birth as a miracle of God. They gave him the name Theodoret out of profound gratitude,<sup>1</sup> and accordingly he was brought up in a pious way. In his youth, Theodoret had the great opportunity to study in highly esteemed monasteries, and he attained vast knowledge both in theology and in philosophy.<sup>2</sup> The nature of his early studies are not known exactly, but his skills in languages and literature imply a good education.<sup>3</sup> It was the Antiochian theological tradition that gave him the ground and major principles for all his theological work. Without a doubt, his Antiochian predecessors, such as Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus, should be identified as his guiding authorities. Theodoret himself greatly honours these well-known teachers.<sup>4</sup> Theodoret must have been able to rapidly assume and to process a great amount of theological knowledge since he worked as a lecturer among priests already at a young age. Theodoret lost his parents by the age of 23. He proved his mature spiritual Christian identity when he gave his entire remarkable heritage to poor people and settled to live in a monastery for seven years. After these years had passed, Theodoret was ordained as the bishop of Cyrus, according to tradition, though against his own will. Theodoret continued to practise the virtue of poverty. During his time as bishop, he donated all his salary to the development of his hometown. Scholars have pictured him as “a real shepherd in his diocese”, seeking its unity and guiding heretics back to the Church.<sup>5</sup> Theodoret was a highly esteemed

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<sup>1</sup> The name Theodoret means “The Gift of God”.

<sup>2</sup> Niketas Siniossoglou evaluates Theodoret’s skills in philosophy as solid and his work *Graecarum Affectionum Curatio* as being “one of the best Christian replies to pagan philosophy”. Theodoret’s approach to Plato and Plotinus proves to be a considerable philosophical education. Theodoret usually cites intermediaries to support his opinions. Siniossoglou 2008, 2, 9.

<sup>3</sup> “Being determined to live life dedicated to God, he acquired a substantial biblical knowledge and a close familiarity with the teaching of earlier theologians. Although, the details of his education are not known to us, his works reveal a vast erudition. Apart from his mother tongue, Syriac, he mastered Greek and Hebrew. His secular education was peculiarly impressive. For example, in the “*Cure of Greek Maladies*” alone he quotes more than one hundred pagan philosophers, poets and historians in about 340 passages.” Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 4.

<sup>4</sup> For Theodoret’s predecessors in the Antiochene school, see also Young 1983, 266.

<sup>5</sup> “The inhabitants of the 800 parishes of his diocese were not particularly educated: this vast area had always been ‘swarming with heretics’. Often facing threats to his life, Theodoret brought thousands of various schismatics back into the body of the church. This was untypical for contemporary churchmen



orator,<sup>6</sup> almost on the same level as John Chrysostom,<sup>7</sup> and he regularly visited Antioch to give sermons.<sup>8</sup>

Theodoret was a peace-loving churchman. However, he faced many difficult controversies throughout his career. In fact, only at the very beginning of his bishopric was he able to work peacefully in his diocese. In the year 428, the stormy period was at hand. The two decades to come would include involvement in hard Christological debate. The debate damaged Theodoret's personal life, and the real content of Theodoret's Theology has been misunderstood and blackmailed because of the furious attitudes of some of the debaters. Since the controversy occupied such crucial a place in Theodoret's life, it is necessary to present the central events of the controversy that had effects on him.

Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople<sup>9</sup>, was the one of the Eastern fathers who initially caused the controversy. Nestorius gave a polemical sermon, probably at Christmas in 428, which was so overloaded with Antiochian dualistic expressions that a fight with Alexandrians was unavoidable. As an extreme devotee of the 'two nature' Christology of Antiochians, Nestorius refused to accept the traditional conception of "the God bearer" (*Θεοτόκος*). He thought that the expression emphasises Christ's divine nature too much and encourages monophysitism, resulting in the unacceptable claim that there was only one divine nature in Christ, to whom Mary gave birth. Nestorius, for his part, was eager to emphasise Christ's humanity. At first, to reach this goal, he separated the birth of Christ and the inhumanation of the Logos. He asserted that Christ was not born as a divine being from Mary, but only as a human being. Divinity simply came to Christ from God. When coming to Christ, the divine nature assumed the human nature, and settled to live in him. Without the coming of the divine nature, Christ could not have been God. Consequently, the two different natures in Christ must be totally noted and differentiated (*χωρίζειν*) from each other. However, Nestorius asserted that the union

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(including both Cyril and Nestorius), who rather preferred to use military force in order to obliterate physically the heresies together with the heretics". Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 15.

<sup>7</sup> John Chrysostom (347-407), presbyter of Antioch and bishop of Constantinople, produced a large amount of homilies and further developed the Antiochene literal interpretation on the Bible. See also Theodoret's own admiration of Chrysostom in his ecclesiastical history. *Eccl.*, 200-202. Trans. Kessinger Publishing.

<sup>8</sup> Concerning young Theodoret see: Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 1-6 and Young 1983, 266-271.

<sup>9</sup> Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople from 428 to 431.

in Christ was not apparent but substantial. He refuted all Alexandrian accusations that there could be “two different Sons” or “two persons” in his Christology. Whether there definitely are “two persons” in Christ in the Christology of Nestorius, as his opponents have claimed, has been a difficult question to answer. The suspicion and condemnation expressed against Nestorius by the Alexandrian party was reflected on all Antiochians. This suspicion also coloured the interpretation of the contributions of Theodoret of Cyrus.<sup>10</sup>

The polemical sermon of Nestorius raised a stormy debate between Alexandrian and Antiochian theologians<sup>11</sup> that threatened the unity of the Church. During the debate, Theodoret constantly wanted to serve as a mediator. At first, and in vain, he and John of Antioch and his party tried to persuade Nestorius to give up his attacking, which contradicted and offended the old Christian tradition of using the term *Θεοτόκος*.<sup>12</sup> Nestorius did not withdraw, and he was eventually condemned in the Council of Ephesus in 431. Theodoret saw his friend defeated and tried to defend him in order to return him to his position in the Church. To defend the defeated, Theodoret attacked Nestorius’ enemies, especially Cyril of Alexandria, who was the leading Alexandrian theologian. By doing this, Theodoret took on a prominent and, by its effects, a far-reaching role in the debate. He took this dangerous step by delivering his polemic writing titled “*Refutation of Cyril's Twelve Anathemas*”. It is Theodoret’s the most noted act before the council of Ephesus in 431 and the reason for which he was accused, slandered and even anathematized for a short time. In addition, some of his works were counted among the group of anathematized writings by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553.<sup>13</sup> The real circumstances of the process in the debate have often been neglected. It would be fair to note, when evaluating the position of “*the Refutation*”, that Theodoret only wrote it at the

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<sup>10</sup>“For Nestorius, Jesus Christ was both fully God and fully man, but the divine and human natures must be kept distinct and unabbreviated in the incarnation. There must be two of everything – two natures, two substances, two wills, two sets of attributes – and therefore, also two persons (*πρόσωπα*)”. Braaten 1984, 503-504. However, Nestorius pursued a speculative analysis of the unity of Christ. He also attempts to root this unity in the ontological sphere. Nestorius himself repudiates the teaching of two sons of which he was accused, “*I did not say that the Son was one (person) and God the Word was by nature one and the temple by nature another, one Son by conjunction*” (Nestoriana, 308, 8-11), Grillmeier 1975, 455-463. See also Pihkala 2004, 228.

<sup>11</sup> Concerning the Nestorian controversy and Theodoret, see, Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 7-13 and Clayton 2007, 135-166.

<sup>12</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 16.

<sup>13</sup> There was also another writing by Theodoret, “*Pentalogos*”, that was condemned in the Council of 533, Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 18.

request of John of Antioch, not on his own initiative.<sup>14</sup> In a broad sense, the writing was a collective Antiochian aim to defend one of its threatened members, Nestorius. To approach Theodoret's theological oeuvre in a proper manner, it would not be fair to interpret his work based on the assumption that he held identical emphases as Nestorius did in his Christology.

Theodoret's positive contributions have been largely neglected. During the debates, he contributed positively towards the process of unifying the church. Even in "Refutation", he accentuates many similarities between the Antiochians and the Alexandrians.<sup>15</sup> Approximately just before the year 431, Theodoret wrote his two dogmatic presentations "*De Sancta et Vivifica Trinitate*" and "*De Incarnatione Domini*". His orthodox and positive style is clearly proven by the fact that these writings were later, falsely, attributed to his opponent Cyril up until the nineteenth century. The theological understandings of Theodoret and Cyril were so similar that the change of authorship was believable. Although Theodoret did not follow the radical statements of Nestorius, he was never willing to proclaim a personal anathema against Nestorius. Theodoret succeeded in avoiding condemnation of Nestorius until the year 451, when he was forced to do so in the presence of all the other Chalcedonian bishops. Theodoret wrote the following texts, in addition to two others, before the Council of Ephesus in 431: "*A Cure of Greek Maladies*", "*Against the Jews*", "*Exposition of the Right Faith (Expositio Rectae Fidei)*", "*Questions and Responses for the Orthodox*" (also attributed to Justin Martyr), "*Against Arians and Eunomians*", "*Against Macedonians*" (*On the Holy Spirit*) and "*Against Marcionites*".<sup>16</sup>

Theodoret's works contain some of the most important contributions to the doctrinal unity of the Church. It was he who composed the text for the document of agreement, "*the Formula of Reunion*", which was signed in the year 433. In that document, both sides of the dispute accepted the term "*Θεοτόκος*" and in this way refuted Nestorius' controversial conception. Theodoret has styled the text so that both parties could find their basic Christological expressions in the new formulation. All the terms and expressions that the Antiochians required in order to apply their

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<sup>14</sup> Letter to John in SC 429, 62-71. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 10. See also Grillmeier 1975, 488.

<sup>15</sup> Pihkala 2004, 249.

<sup>16</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 6.

“prosopic kind of union in Christ” and that the Alexandrians required to apply their “hypostatic kind of union in Christ” were included.<sup>17</sup> Signing the formula was a new essential step toward unity in the Eastern Church because not all bishops were represented at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The absence of many at the council was due to the plan of the Alexandrians to condemn Nestorius. This plan was known to the Antiochians before the council, and accordingly they did not take part in it, but rather arranged their own counter-council. It is important to note Theodoret’s central role in the process of making peace since the same intention is found in his theological works. In order to attain stability in the Eastern theological discussion and maintain any gains, Theodoret formulated his texts carefully in support of his peaceful aims. In some cases, to make the text acceptable entailed an application of expressions from both sides. This also would affect some confusion to his readers for understanding the roots of his own conceptions. “*The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*” was written during the years 435-448,<sup>18</sup> after the formal peace of *Formula of Reunion*. The tension and the aim for peace must be noted when studying the text of the Commentary.

The period from the signing of “*the Formula of Reunion*” to the death of Cyril of Alexandria (433-444) was a time of uneasy peace. However, it was peaceful enough that Theodoret had the opportunity to concentrate on his local work, which he felt his very own. He could guide his diocese in preaching and interpreting the Holy Scripture. Theodoret's writings from this time period are numerous. He wrote commentaries on the Song of Songs, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Twelve Minor Prophets in the first half of the decade and “*The Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul*” in the last half of the decade. In addition to these, he wrote “*The Defence of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia*”, “*On Divine Providence*” and “*Historia Religiosa*”. Theodoret's whole vocabulary and expressions changed to be less

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<sup>17</sup> Clayton 2007, 162.

<sup>18</sup> *The Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul* is dated by scholars between the years 435-448. The main line is to date it in the early year of 435. However, there are some citations in Theodoret’s works which support later datings. In Commentary on I Cor. Theodoret makes a citing to his former work where he discussed the topic of virginity, but the kind of work is not found in his early oeuvre. Theodoret also quotes his commentary on Psalms when commenting on II Cor., but it was the years between 441 and 448 when the commentary on Psalms was composed. And the commentary on Psalms lists his former works without mentioning the commentary on Pauline Letters. At Christological hymn of Phil. 2:6-11 Theodoret refutes an arsenal of heresies and quotes his early work, which may be “Eranistes” from the year 447. Of the dating, see introduction of *The Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul*, by Hill, Theodoret 2001c, 2-3. and Clayton 2007, 167.

polemic because of the new situation of “uneasy peace”. It is worth noting that, in all his texts that originate from the time, he did not favour Antiochian expressions like “the perfect man” or “the assumed man” in Christ.<sup>19</sup>

Controversies began again after Cyril of Alexandria passed away in 444. The leading theologians of both parties that oversaw the Council of Ephesus in 431 and the “*Formula of Reunion*” in 433 were now gone, and it was time to formulate the new positions in the debate between Alexandrians and Antiochians. In one way, history was to repeat itself. The Alexandrian patriarchs had regularly attacked the patriarchs of Constantinople. Theophilus had attacked John Chrysostom<sup>20</sup>, Cyril had attacked Nestorius and now Dioscuros attacked Flavian<sup>21</sup>, the recently ordained patriarch of Constantinople. Dioscuros formed an alliance with the imperial eunuch, Chrysaphius, and with Eutyches, the archimandrite of Constantinople.<sup>22</sup> Theodoret was drawn into this stormy period as well, which would last until the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

By this time, Theodoret was, without a doubt, the leading theologian in the Antiochian School.<sup>23</sup> It was his duty to defend “*Formula of Reunion*” and its achievements. Theodoret presented his mature Christology in “*Eranistes*” (in 447-448), which was an apology for “two nature” Christology. The writing was a summation of his conceptions, written in the form of dialogue. In the dialogue, the character Orthodoxos (who stands for Theodoret himself) has a discussion with Eranistes (a representative of monophysitism). Theodoret chose the main titles of this three-part presentation to lead readers to consider the basic principles of his Christology. For right understanding, he defines the Trinitarian principles for

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<sup>19</sup> Clayton 2007, 167.

<sup>20</sup> Theophilus was the patriarch of Alexandria from 385. He was known as a theologian and an ecclesiastical statesman. John Chrysostom was the Archbishop of Constantinople from 397. He was an important Early Church Father. He was known for his preaching and public speaking, his denunciation of abuse of authority by both ecclesiastical and political leaders, for his Divine Liturgy and for his ascetic sensibilities. His time in Constantinople was tumultuous. It was for this reason that Theophilus wanted to bring Constantinople under his own sway and opposed John's appointment to Constantinople.

<sup>21</sup> Flavian was Archbishop of Constantinople from 446 to 449. He is venerated as a saint by the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. Dioscorus succeeded Cyril as Patriarch of Alexandria in the summer of 444.

<sup>22</sup> Eutyches taught that, although there were two natures in Christ before the union, after the union there was only one person in Christ. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 19-20.

<sup>23</sup> I will use the name “Antiochian School” when meaning whole Antiochian theological tradition, all though, there were not any special “theological school” institute in Antiochia.

Christology, the quality of the union in Christ and the quality of the divine nature in Christ. The main titles are *The Immutable*, *The Unconfused* and *The Impassible*. Immediately after “*Eranistes*”, Theodoret continued to write “*Historia Ecclesiastica*” (448-9), “*There is One Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ*” (448) and another large collection of letters to defend himself against Dioscorus’ party.<sup>24</sup>

As were his previous commentaries, “*Eranistes*” was written in a polite way. It included numerous citations of Alexandrians. However, it did not secure Theodoret any support from the Alexandrian party. New political forces began to direct an evolution in Christological concepts. An imperial decree confined Theodoret to his diocese, and the *Council of Latrocinium* in 449 deposed him from his bishopric without any trial, along with other Antiochians. The others were Flavian, who did not live long after the meeting because he was badly wounded by supporters of the monophysite party, Ibas of Edessa and Domnus of Antioch. Even Pope Leo I was condemned.<sup>25</sup> Later, Pope Leo called the council “The Robber Synod of Ephesus”.

It took two years for this disastrous situation to settle, and this awkward period in Theodoret's life ended. Emperor Theodosius II died suddenly in 450, and the new empress Pulcheria married senator Marcian, who became the new emperor. They approached Pope Leo asking him to arrange a new council to unify the church again. Eventually, it was arranged in Chalcedon on the first of September, 451. The council restored the position of Theodoret as the bishop of Cyrus on one hard condition. Theodoret was accepted as orthodox through the humiliating event of proclaiming a personal anathema against Nestorius. The official agreement was, however, an important event for Theodoret's future since the later monophysitic councils could no longer criticise Theodoret as a person. The official council of Chalcedon had judged to be orthodox, and he himself had publicly accepted the orthodox Christological formulation of Chalcedon.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Clayton 2007, 167.

<sup>25</sup> Theodoret wrote to Leo: “I lament the disturbance of the church, and long for peace. Twenty-six years have I ruled the church entrusted to me by the God of all, aided by your prayers. (...) [but] if you bid me abide by the sentence of condemnation, I abide; and henceforth I will trouble no man, and will wait for the righteous tribunal of our God and Saviour. God is my witness, my Lord, of that I care not for honour and glory” (SC 111, 62-65; NPNF III, 294). Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 21-27.

Moving on from the Council of Chalcedon, Theodoret delivered the second edition of “*Eranistes*” (the only one that has survived), “*The letter of Theodoret to John Aegae*” (only fragments have survived), “*Haereticarum Fabularum Compendium*” and two works of “*Questions on the Octateuch and the Kings and the Chronicles*”.<sup>27</sup> In the time after Chalcedon, Theodoret withdrew from publicity. We do not know much about his life after that time. He died in 453, either in Cyrus or in the monastery near Apamea.<sup>28</sup> Even during the century to come, Theodoret of Cyrus suffered two more unfair trials, even after his death. Monophysitic interpretation of Chalcedon strengthened its power, and the name of Theodoret was removed from the diptychs. In addition, some of his works were condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 553.

## 1.2. The Problem of God's Impassibility

When starting to analyse God’s impassibility, it is important to paint a picture of the concept of “impassibility” (*ἀπάθεια*) that is thorough enough. This is important because the term *ἀπάθεια* is used without any reservation when expressing the essence of God, and it has not seen any **contradiction** between the concept and expressions of the suffering Christ and his divine impassibility as God. How was it possible to continue to use the verb “ἐπαθῇ” together with *ἀπαθήσῃς*. This analysis will lead to the “two nature” doctrine of Christ’s humanity and divinity. However, first we will look at the central concept of *ἀπάθεια*.

To give an introduction to the concept of *ἀπάθεια*, it is necessary to take a close look at the word *ἀπάθεια* itself. The root of the word is the Greek verb *πάσχω* (*to suffer or to be affected by anything, whether good or bad*). This verb was understood as the opposite to the verb *ποιέω* (*to make, produce, execute, effect, cause*). The verb *πάσχω* is closely linked to the word *τὸ πάθος* (*affection, experience, passion*). *Πάθος* (in plural *πάθει*) refers to anything that can befall a man, in other words, to the alteration of man when being affected in any way. Usually, *πάθος* was related to suffering, misfortune, calamity or other bad incidents. Nevertheless, it was not only

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<sup>27</sup> Clayton 2007, 167.

<sup>28</sup> According to Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, the year of Theodoret’s death is 453; according to Gennadius, it is 457. Ernest Honigmann believes it to be 466, and Yvan Azéma estimates it to be 460.

used to denote negative senses. It also had positive and neutral connotations. It could refer to every affection or passion. Concerning the aims of this study, it is also important to note that *πάθεια* was used in the meaning of having emotions in general. Within the concept of *πάθη*, the Greeks counted several terms that have usually been rendered into English by standard equivalents, such as anger, fear, love, pity, indignation and envy. It was true, concerning the understanding of all Greek terms referring to feelings, that the context gave them various interpretations. The *πάθος* usually had the connotation of possibility to inner alterations. Consequently, to be *πάθεια* necessitates some kind of inner mutability in the person under consideration. The fact that God was generally thought to be immutable caused a serious problem in expressing his *πάθη*, as in love, in hate and in suffering.<sup>29</sup>

The term *ἀπάθεια*, generally linked to God, has the meaning of taking a distance or getting totally rid of affections, which were included under the term *πάθος*. However, the *ἀπάθεια* could have at least a connotation of being involved in something new. In the latter case, the *ἀπάθεια*, in one's involvements, was pursued in order to describe distance and having a control over the affections and emotions. The desirable involvement concerning men only came true in relation to the divine. The ideal was that the soul of a man would entirely turn towards the divine. Consequently, man could reach *ἀπάθεια* and have pure admirable emotions. In such a case, the emotions were not wholly abandoned while having *ἀπάθεια*.<sup>30</sup> On the one hand, in the broadest sense, it is possible to define a man as having complete *ἀπάθει*, provided that there was no emotion or affection in one's mind, soul or body. On the other hand, it could be understood that, within *ἀπάθεια*, one can have emotions or affections if they are under desirable control. The important question is: "Is it possible for God to be an object of someone's effects?" Alexandrian and Antiochian

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<sup>29</sup> Konstan 2006, 3-5. See *Metaphysics*, 1022b. Aristotle has defined the varying meanings of *πάθος*: Affection (*πάθος*) first had the meaning to have a quality in virtue of which alteration is possible; e.g., whiteness and blackness, sweetness and bitterness, heaviness and lightness, etc. Second, it had the meaning of the actualization of these qualities; i.e. the alterations already realized. Third, to say it more particularly, it refers to hurtful alterations and motions, and especially hurts which cause suffering. Also, it had a meaning of extreme cases of misfortune and suffering which are called affections."

<sup>30</sup> The Cappadocian Fathers supported this view of having virtues in controlling the emotions, while not wholly denying them. *Canticum*, 207-209. PG 31, 869D-873B. *Canticum*, 24, 25, 135, 313, 314. *Orationes*, 26.13, PG 35, 1245B. Knuuttila 2004, 133. Evagrius, the deacon of Constantinople, suggested that *apatheia* is the condition of *agape* and the ultimate goal of the practical life. Knuuttila 2004, 142.



theologians had, due to their philosophical orientation, different standpoints on this question. The Antiochian tradition, which Theodoret of Cyrus followed, was more tolerant of expressing God as having passions.<sup>31</sup>

The sources of this study range from the fourth and the fifth centuries. The orthodox doctrines of Christology underwent a profound evolution at the time. The starting point of this evolution was the Trinitarian unity, established at Nicaea in 325. The council of Nicaea had assured the doctrine of the common essence of *God the Father* and *God the Son* (ὁμοούσιος). In accordance, it was declared at Constantinople in 381 that the divine common essence also pertains to the third person of the Triad, the *Holy Spirit* (ὁμοούσιον). This Trinitarian unity was challenged when the Christological doctrine was being defined, with the aim to take both the humanity and the divinity of Christ seriously. One question that was difficult to answer was how to avoid dissonance between divine impassibility (ἀπάθεια) and human passibility (πάθεια) in the very same Person of Christ?

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<sup>31</sup> “Plato introduced the analysis of emotions into philosophy as part of his famous tripartition of the soul in book IV of the Republic. The appetitive part (ἐπιθυμητικόν) seeks sensual pleasure and avoids suffering, whereas the spirited part (θυμοειδής) is the seat of emotions connected with self-affirmation and aggression. The reasoning part (λογιστικόν), subject of knowledge and rational value attitudes, should govern the emotional parts by controlling the movements of the appetitive part and habituating the spirited part to support good conduct.” Knuuttila 2013, 463.

“The Stoics argued for the unity and rationality of the human soul and, consequently, rejected the idea of a special emotional part of the soul. Instead of treating emotions as a part of the natural constitution of human beings, they saw emotions to be essentially an acquired habit of forming value judgements, by which people mistakenly evaluate things from their subjective perspectives. Learning to identify oneself as a representative of cosmic rationality makes emotions disappear.” Knuuttila 2013, 464.

“The Alexandrian theologians Clement and Origen combined Stoic and Platonist ideas, arguing that ἀπάθεια was part of Christian perfectibility, and a precondition for divinization. This mystical union was described in highly emotional language, although the experiences associated with it were separated from emotions.” Knuuttila 2013, 464

Clement of Alexandria and Origen were the theologians whose writings brought out much more philosophical knowledge, and their Christian theology operated based on what was common before them. They expressed the divination of the soul in a very Platonic way. The central part of the process of the perfection of soul was to get rid of profane values. In this view, the Stoic therapy of feelings was useful for Christian struggle. Clement wrote that divine reason became a human being in Christ in order to give all human beings the ability of deification. It was an example for human beings. According to Origen, Christ taught love that was free of feelings to all believers willing to reach perfection. Simo Knuuttila, Kaarakainen T. ja Kaukua J. ed., 2004, 63. Gregory of Nyssa and other Cappadocians had adopted more platonic conceptions in the Antiochian tradition than the stoically inclined Alexandrian theologians had. Emotions were more acceptable, but controlled at the same time. Simo Knuuttila, Kaarakainen T. ja Kaukua J. ed., 2004, 65.

The question was, of course, necessarily related to the conception of God's presence in the human world and to the conceptions of his transcendence and of his immanence. The Fathers, on the one hand, had to ask how God entirely transcends the passible order, which he created for men. Does his transcendence set a limit on the divine nature that it could not take part in any human experience? The question also concerned God's eternal immutability. Is it possible for God's real essence to change in any way? On the other hand, would God, in his divinity, be the substance that would ontologically relate itself to an act within the created order? This leads to the secondary question of whether it is possible for God to have real passions when related to the created world. A negative answer would lead to the conception that God's presence in human life is only apparent (docetic). It was compulsory to ask if it is in any way possible to have real immanence without being capable of having passions? A positive answer concerning God's capability for passions, in turn, leads to the danger of God being immutable in his very nature.

The Church Fathers had to form their understanding of God's impassibility in the context of the Biblical tradition of the Church and in the context of the philosophical atmosphere that surrounded them.<sup>32</sup> The mainstream of contemporary philosophical thinking considered it an undeniable axiom that Divine nature is always impassible since it is immutable. The controlling principle of Platonic theodicy, which has been seen to maintain its effect throughout the Middle and Neo-Platonic contexts, considered God to be completely self-sufficient, all-perfect, transcendent, and an unchanging substance. Thus, it would not be possible to affect him from the outside.<sup>33</sup> When trying to be, in the first place, true to the Biblical tradition of the loving God, all the Fathers, like Theodoret, had to make a long journey to find expressions satisfactory enough to both the Biblical tradition and to the surrounding philosophical atmosphere.

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<sup>32</sup> "So the history of Christian theology, now beginning, was often like a movement made up of two steps forward and one back. Hardly any speculative attempt at interpretation succeeded at once. Corrections had to be made continually in the light of the church tradition. If these were refused, the result was the real paganizing and hellenizing, and thus a debasing, of the Christian revelation." Grillmeier 1975, 107.

<sup>33</sup> See Weinandy, 2000, 19.

Particularly, the Fathers did not see similarities between the expressions of the Old Testament and the philosophical conceptions of God's *ἀπάθεια*.<sup>34</sup> In the Old Testament, God's immanence was presented through the simple picture of God being present in the midst of the Hebrews. He acted entirely within their history. The highlights of the presence, when God's glory was clearly realized, are called the moments of "Shekinah" (in the rabbinic tradition).<sup>35</sup> When it comes to transcendence, it is simply presented as the way that God acted among his people. According to the Biblical narratives, and opposed to the Greek philosophy by which the Fathers were affected, God seems to be fully capable of having passions. He can love, hate, be delighted, grieve, experience all emotions, and be ready to suffer for and with human beings. The Biblical tradition also contained the opposite message, which pictured God as transcendent when hiding his face from men. However, mainly the concept of a completely transcendent and impassible God was a derivation of philosophical orientation. According to many scholars, the Greek philosophical concept of "God's impassibility" was simply imported into Christian

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<sup>34</sup> This does not mean that the Old Testament contain wisdom and speculatively philosophical thoughts. On the contrary, Gerhard von Rad has proved the opposite to be true. On the one hand, there are always the limits of faith in the wisdom of the Old Testament. On the other hand, there is the challenge to attain knowledge of the unknowable, which forces speculative processing of a high value.

"The process of secularization which definitely began in the early monarchy does not, in the teachings of the wise men, go hand in hand with a disintegration of faith in Yahweh's power. That would be a simple and, to us, familiar process. Rather, we see the teachers - with what sometimes appears to us as an uncanny confidence - holding together the awareness of inherent determinism on the one hand and Faith in Yahweh's power on the other, indeed even mingling the two. The idea of life completely embedded in sacral ordinances has gone." ... "If it is permissible to measure the high-water mark of a people's knowledge by what they know of the unknowable, then Israel was extremely knowledgeable. One can hardly say that ancient Near Eastern wisdom outside Israel felt forced into such doubt... "To greater extent, than is the case in any other intellectual or religious sphere, Israel's wisdom has borrowed from neighbouring cultures. Indeed, she perhaps first learned, through her familiarity with foreign wisdom, to see correctly the real importance of many of the basic human questions. But what she borrowed, she incorporated into the sphere of a belief in God and an understanding of reality which were different from those of her neighbours." ... "Equipped with this knowledge, Israel scarcely took any serious part in the philosophical debate. It was perhaps because she found no partner for dialogue within the popular philosophical movements of the late ancient world, perhaps out of a growing feeling that any complete agreement was no longer possible, linked with an increasingly certain awareness of the unique nature of her own intellectual and religious assets. Without claiming complete knowledge, Israel believed that she had knowledge of a unique kind of truth." Rad Gerhard von 1972, 60, 109, 317, 318.

<sup>35</sup> The Hebrew word "*shekinah*" derives from the verb *shakan*, which means 'to dwell'. The term was applied by the Jews, especially in the Targums, to the divine glory which dwelt in the tabernacle and the Temple, and which was manifested by a visible cloud resting over the mercy-seat in the Holy of Holies. It is said to have first appeared over the Ark when Moses consecrated the Tabernacle; and afterwards it moved to the temple, upon the consecration of the Temple by Solomon, where it remained until the destruction of that building. The Shekinah is thought to have disappeared after the destruction of the first Temple, and not to have been present in the second. See <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/13537-shekinah>.

thought. They hold the view that the concept was adopted in a way that the Fathers were not even aware that they were captivated by it, and they did not see its contradiction to the Christian revelation.

In the New Testament, it was easily possible to see “bridges” between God living among his people and the philosophical doctrine of God’s transcendence. These “bridges” have been identified around the New Testament’s evangelistic and apologetic appeals to the Gentiles that the true God is the One Creator God, who can both be unseen to man and be realised to man. For example, the apostle Paul states that the pagans have no excuse for not knowing God. Ever since the Creation, the transcendent God has allowed his eternal power (*αἰδίου δύναμις*) and the divine nature (*Θεοτέτης*) to be seen only through immanent created things. The visible creation itself indicates the eternal divine nature with its divine properties. In order to indicate God’s full presence in the human world, Paul supports both God’s transcendence and immanence in the created world. He says that the pagans have exchanged the glory of the immortal (*ἀφθάρτου*) God for images resembling a mortal (*φθαρτοῦ*) human being. Hidden in Paul’s words is the axiom of the transcendence of God, who is able to be with all humankind. If His transcendence were taken away, what would be the reason for God, through the immanent world, to give himself to be realised to men?<sup>36</sup>

God, of course, is undeniably seen in Christ. The Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries placed all their attention on defining and asserting their Christological formulations. In order to determine a specific Father’s conception of God’s impassibility, it is necessary to start with his Christological conception, which is linked to his concept of the Trinity. From this point, it is also possible to advance further to define the position of God’s divine nature in the passible human context. In

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<sup>36</sup> Rom. 1:20-23. Weinandy 2000, 41, 69. Grant mentions Greek and Roman authors to whom the New Testament texts may allude. See Grant 1966, 3-14. Adolf Von Harnack used the same argument to criticise both heterodox and orthodox Fathers. He said that the Gnostic teachings represented an acutely Hellenized distortion of the gospel by philosophy, whereas the orthodox position exhibited the same kind of distortion, only it worked out more gradually. Harnack, *Outlines of the History of dogma*, 66-7. See also Gavriluk 2006, 3, 4. Pannenberg denies that the Christian faith was fully Hellenized as Harnack and Ritchl asserted. However, he also assesses that the Greek notion of God’s immutability harmed a proper Christian understanding of God. It distorted the conception of God’s presence in the world, especially within Christology. According to Pannenberg, divine immutability does not leave enough room for the living God’s inner plenitude, creative activity, freedom, spontaneous act and acts in history. Pannenberg 1971, 160-165. Weinandy 2000, 20.

turn, it is possible to say that the conception of God's impassibility reveals the very core of one's understanding of the entire structure of Christology. The study of God's impassibility in the Christology of the Church Fathers is one of the fields that can shed much more light on the entire theological conceptions of *ἀπάθεια*. Some scholars argue that it was just the different interpretations of God's impassibility, the understanding of the way that God is present in the world, which continually caused the different emphases and even fights between the 'schools' concerning theology as a whole. Such is the case, for example, with regard to the tensions between the Alexandrians and Antiochians, the latter being the 'school party' of the author of the sources for this study, Theodoret of Cyrus.<sup>37</sup>

When it comes to orthodox Christology, it was constantly being held up as a derivation of the concept of the Trinitarian unity. From this basis, it was used for the purpose of defining properly the place of Christ's two natures i.e. Christ's capability to practice both his transcendence and his immanence. The most important council for defining the orthodox Christological structure was held in Chalcedon in 451. At Chalcedon, the Fathers of the Church eventually came to a common agreement on both the unity and the duality of Christ.

The Early Fathers, while they intended to derive all their theological principles from the Biblical texts, had to work within the environment of Jewish and Hellenic thought. In order to be successful in their evangelical mission, they had to use the language and concepts that were prevalent among their contemporary philosophical schools. Consequently, the concept of God's absolute "impassibility" (*ἀπάθεια*) began to dominate the theology of the patristic period. All the major Greek philosophical Schools are possible sources for their assumptions of *ἀπάθεια*.<sup>38</sup> Although the conception of *ἀπάθεια* prevailed, the tradition that described God as suffering and capable of emotions still existed in the Church, at least as a "minor theme" that lasted throughout the patristic period.<sup>39</sup> This theme comes out so

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<sup>37</sup> Yet, it can be argued that the real distinction in thought between the Antiochian and Alexandrian 'schools' of theology in the late fourth and fifth centuries was not simply a quarrel about the structure of Christ's person as an isolated issue; their debate, rather, revealed fundamentally different conceptions of how God is involved in creation and history. Daley 2007, 27.

<sup>38</sup> Gavrilyuk 2006, 3. Weinandy 2000, 83.

<sup>39</sup> Gavrilyuk 2006, 4. Also O'Keefe with Pannenberg is critical to common concept of full Hellenizing of Christianity: "Contrary to what we may think, the impassibility of God was not taken for granted in the patristic period, even by many 'orthodox' theologians. One recent study demonstrates convincingly

obviously in single expressions at times that it has raised the question whether the term “impassibility” (*ἀπάθεια*), so frequently used, even has the same etymological content in all the writings of the Fathers.<sup>40</sup>

In spite of the varying degrees to which Hellenic thought was adopted, the Early Fathers adopted the concept of *ἀπάθεια* into their theological presentation and doctrines and even necessitated it. They have been accused of narrowing the Biblical message by their philosophical orientation. However, critical theological research, while assessing the patristic view as philosophically one-sided “*ἀπάθεια* theology”, has itself taken a one-sided point of view in their evaluations. In theological discussions during the last century, the concept of God’s passibility has become more and more dominating. This shift has made it possible to attain a fair understanding on the theological presentation of the Fathers. The biblical veins in the theology of the Fathers has been noted more clearly. Many recent theologians who do not follow the main line of the old tradition have disposed of the concept of God’s absolute immutability and impassibility.<sup>41</sup> They describe God as one-sidedly sensitive, emotional and passionate, even on such a scale that it is necessary to ask where the real transcendence of God is. From this standpoint, too, the evaluation of the patristic Fathers would be easily one-sided. The new axioms have established their place so well that there have been only a few arguments against them.<sup>42</sup> The main argument for divine passibility has been the connection of God’s love and his suffering. It has been impossible to understand God’s eternal love without his readiness to be with those who suffer and to be ready to suffer himself.<sup>43</sup> A theological shift has taken place regarding experiences of suffering. When trying to find theological consolation, it has even been asserted that the God who does not

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that a significant number of patristic authors made surprisingly ‘theopaschite’ remarks, including Clement, Tertullian, and Origen. Likewise, studies of the fourth century have noted that divine suffering raised serious theological questions during the theological debates of the fourth century.” O’Keefe 1997, 358-359.

<sup>40</sup> Chadwick has noted that it has been ignored that the Church had to campaign against pagan gods who possessed human passions. In these debates, the concept of *ἀπάθεια* carries a different meaning and connotation. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 32.

<sup>41</sup> Fairbairn was the first to state the new turn regarding the concept of God’s passibility, saying that ‘Theology has no false idea than that of the impassibility of God’, Fairbairn 1893, 483.

<sup>42</sup> Moltmann seems to be fully confident in the success of the new line of thought when saying, ‘The doctrine of the essential impassibility of the divine nature now seems finally to be disappearing from the Christian doctrine of God. Moltmann 1991, xvi.

<sup>43</sup> Moltmann excludes the possibility that the God of Christianity could be impassible: “Were God incapable of suffering in any respect, and therefore in an absolute sense, then he would also be incapable of love.” Moltmann 1974, 230. See also Moltmann 1981, 38 and Moltmann 1991, 29.

take part in human suffering would not be God at all. Moltmann's statement reveals the shift in theology with its strict form:

There can be no theology 'after Auschwitz', which does not take up the theology in Auschwitz, i.e. the prayers and cries of the victims. God was present where the Shema of Israel and Lord's Prayer were prayed. As a companion in suffering God gave comfort where humanly there was nothing to hope for in that hell. The inexpressible sufferings in Auschwitz were also the sufferings of God himself.<sup>44</sup>

According to the statement of God's divine passibility, theology has turned to confess that both the Son and the Father felt the pain and suffered in the Passion. On the cross, the Son suffered for the whole of mankind. He felt agony and the loss of the Father. Furthermore, the Father suffered the loss of his Son. 'The death comes upon God himself and the Father suffers the death of his Son in his love for forsaken man.'<sup>45</sup>

Both the old axiom of the Early Fathers and the new axiom of many recent scholars concerning God's capability to suffer seem to have very much in common. From their own standpoints, they each have made their choice between *ἀπάθεια* and *πάθεια* even before deeper theological reflection. The historical context has guided them to interpretations that are understandable in their contexts. However, the Biblical message of God's love and sacrifice has its central place in the theological presentations of both. The truth is that the Biblical message has carried the concept of a suffering God, no matter how it has been interpreted in different contexts. God's *ἀπάθεια*, in patristic thought, is not expressed only through philosophically coloured doctrines, but also by a living Biblical interpretation of a loving and suffering God. In order to understand the conceptions of the Fathers, we need both the picture of their doctrinal structure and the picture of their Biblical interpretation. First, it is necessary to see how philosophical orientations have guided their doctrinal structures. Second, it is necessary to see how these orientations left space for the Biblical message of the suffering divinity. To understand the Fathers is to take a place among their listeners and to evaluate their Biblical interpretation in the contexts that they were meant to be in, as a living message that is presented within the limits of the understanding of their contemporary listeners.

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<sup>44</sup> Moltmann 1991, 29. Kitamori defines the pain of God as the most central truth of the gospel. Kitamori 1966, 19.

<sup>45</sup> Moltmann 1974, 151-152

### 1.3. The Subject of Suffering in the Christology of Alexandria and Antiochia

The theological contribution of the Fathers in the late fourth and early fifth centuries mainly consisted of Christological achievements. Consequently, the conception of *ἀπάθεια* rose from Christological presentations. In these presentations, the Fathers had various views on *ἀπάθεια*, concerning either the human or divine actions of Christ. In Christ's incarnation, the impassible God, as the Son, became a passible man. The concept of God's *ἀπάθεια*, as it is found in the Christological framework, was essentially dependent on an understanding of the quality of the union between God and man in Christ. In the council of Chalcedon in 451, the Fathers were ready to confess in agreement that the perfect God and the perfect man are in Christ's person. In his person, Christ was possible to see paradoxically both the impassible God and the passible man. The person of Christ was understood as the basis of the unity of these parts. In a wide range, both unity and duality were confessed to be in Christ. There were quite different opinions about which one of these should be the main point, as was made clear when the debate arose again afterwards. Chalcedon was still an official synod of the Orthodox Church and a great achievement of the theologians of the time. The negotiations were futile almost up until the Council at Chalcedon due to the tight blocks of the different schools. As the real subject of Christ's human experiences, the Fathers often used to express only one of his two natures or his person.

The main participants in the discussion of the Eastern Church were the Antiochian and the Alexandrian 'Schools'.<sup>46</sup> Their Christological principles can be seen in the derivations from the two different traditions in the meeting with the Arian position in the Trinitarian debate. Arius had asserted that the being of the Logos was derivative and contingent, not transcendent and immutable like the being of God. To Arius, the Logos was fully mutable, passible and subject to all the human experiences of Christ. Divine impassibility was secured by emphasising God's total transcendence of Christ's manhood. In the time before Nicaea, most other theologians, not only Arius, necessitated some kind of hierarchy of being in the Divinity. The transcendent and

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<sup>46</sup> There was no official theological "school" in Antiochia like it were in Alexandria.



eternal God, who was linked to his creation through the non-divine mediating Logos,<sup>47</sup> held the highest status in this hierarchy. The position of Arius was refuted in Nicaea in 325. In the same decision, the conception of the hierarchy was officially destroyed. Following the council, it was confessed that there is still a radical distinction between the transcendent Creator and his immanent creatures. The mediating One cannot be located between the two, and it is necessary to ask on which side is the Logos located.<sup>48</sup>

The Alexandrian tradition had developed the understanding that there is only *one divine subject* in Christ. Consequently, every experience that is not suitable to his divinity is not to be attributed to him in his very essence. Athanasius had settled this initial point. He had asserted that the Logos himself did not experience any weakness or passion in its essential being. Human limitations are only to be attributed to the flesh that he took on. To be precise, Athanasius did not divide the essence of Christ since the Logos remained the subject of the incarnation. Athanasius's premise only converted the incarnation to be less real and closer to Docetism than to the notion of dividing Christ into his two different natures.<sup>49</sup> The Alexandrian tradition developed this idea towards the mature expression of Cyril of Alexandria that there is *one ὑπόστασις* and a *hypostatic union* between the λόγος and the σάρξ in Christ. The extreme and heretical model of this idea is found in monophysite Apollinarianism.<sup>50</sup> Apollinarius completely denied the full humanity of Christ. According to the tradition of Alexandria, the Logos has two states of existence. On the one hand, it has its being in pre-existence as the eternal and transcendent God. On the other hand, it has volunteered to accept the incarnate state. In the incarnate state, being the very subject of Christ, the Logos allows itself to have human and passible experiences. This is possible even though in its only essential nature, that being God, it is not

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<sup>47</sup> The structure is possible to express in the very platonic terms that 'the One-Many or Indefinite Dyad provided the link between the Many and the ultimate One'. Young 1983, 178-179.

<sup>48</sup> Young has assessed the following: "Nicaea changed the whole theological landscape. God's transcendent being, immutable and impassible, eternal and underivative, was an assumption, which went unquestioned by all parties". Young sees that both the Arian position and the Nicene position are perfectly clear and unequivocal in the Trinitarian sense. However, when it comes to Christology, the Nicene Council's conclusion raised new questions and it only changed the ground of debate. Young 1983, 179.

<sup>49</sup> Athanasius would go so far to say: "τα ἡμῶν ἐμιμήσατο" – (he imitated our characteristics). Young 1983, 74. Richard 1947, 5-54.

<sup>50</sup> *Monophysite* and *monophysitism* refer to the conception that there is only one divine nature in Christ.

capable of change. In the Christology of the Alexandrian ‘school’, the Logos is the unquestionable subject of Christ and his humanity remains impersonal flesh.<sup>51</sup>

The Antiochian ‘school’ had a different view of the Christology of Christ’s suffering. The roots of the Antiochian tradition have been seen to originate from the Christology of Paul of Samosata. However, the meeting with the Arian position was the impetus for the Christological working of the Antiochians too. The Antiochian issue with the Arians was how could the impassible Logos become the real subject of the incarnation and of its passible experiences, without the personal divine presence in Christ. Antiochians themselves generally stressed that it really was not possible to attribute any weakness, fallibility or passion to the Divine, but it was possible to do so to the man that the Divine had assumed; and assumption by the Divine was necessary to execute God’s divine plan. From this basis, the Antiochians produced a clearly dualistic picture of Christ. Instead of the Alexandrian *λόγος - σάρξ*<sup>52</sup> model, the Antiochians created the *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος*<sup>53</sup> model of Christology. They claimed that the impassible divine Logos had assumed the passible ‘perfect man’ with its soul and body. After the assumption, there were two perfect and different natures (*δυο φύσεις*) in Christ. However, the existence of the perfect soul of man in Christ was fully expressed only gradually,<sup>54</sup> and it was not until Theodore of Mopsuestia (the bishop of Mopsuestia from 392 to 428 AD)<sup>55</sup> that the soul of Christ was successfully formulated as a theological factor. Since then, the question whether

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<sup>51</sup> Young 1983, 179. Grillmeier has asserts that Cyril did not deny the existence of the human soul of Christ, but the soul was not the theological factor to him. Grillmeier 1975, 417.

<sup>52</sup> The *λόγος - σάρξ* -Christology assumes, at least in its primitive forms, that the Logos and flesh are directly conjoined in Christ and that Christ has no human soul. Grillmeier 1975, 238.

<sup>53</sup> The *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος* -Christology assumes that there is full manhood in Christ. Theodore of Mopsuestia made the soul of Christ a theological factor. If the Godhead had replaced the soul, it would have been so powerful that it would of necessity also have replaced role of a body, in which case those who denied the reality of Christ’s bodily nature would be right. Thus, there is complete manhood in Christ, and it follows that the idea of the distinction between the natures in Christ must come to the fore. Grillmeier 1975, 426- 428

<sup>54</sup> Young 1983, 179-180. Diodore of Tarsus, one of the important representatives of the Antiochian School, was instrumental in developing the *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος* and ‘two natures’ Christology. Yet, his terminology, according to Grillmeier, was predominantly of the *λόγος - σάρξ* type (which was, according to Grillmeier, inherited from Eusebius of Emesa). He addressed neither Jesus’ divine nor human growth, but he described the growth merely as the transformation of wisdom from the God to the man. Grillmeier 1975, 418. Young 1983, 195. Like other theologians before Theodore of Mopsuestia in the Antiochian school, John Chrysostom also did not make the soul of Christ’s human nature a theological factor. Grillmeier assesses that “once again, on the threshold of the fifth century, we find a theologian in whose writings the soul of Christ, while being a physical reality, is not a theological factor in the interpretation of Christ.” Grillmeier 1975, 419.

<sup>55</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350 – 428) was the bishop of Mopsuestia from 392 to 428 AD.

there are also two persons or even two Sons in Christ was continually discussed in the Christology of Antiochians.<sup>56</sup>

To conclude, the concept of “God's impassibility” could have been settled in different ways according to the structures of the different Christologies of the Eastern Fathers. The passible subject was seen as located in varying places in Christ. This question remained an indispensable part of the Christological discussion between the councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon.<sup>57</sup> The Alexandrians built their conception on the grounds of their Christology of “Oneness”, stressing the “predominance” of the Divinity, and the subject in Christ in all experiences was, without exception, the “Logos”. Although their moderate wing admitted that Christ had a human soul too, the “Logos” of God was undoubtedly the mental centre in Christ. It would have been logical to conclude that God, in the Divine Logos, was passible in Christ's human experiences. However, it seems that especially the Alexandrians were unwilling to admit this. They obviously were also “captivated” by the Hellenistic philosophical axiom that the divine could not suffer, and they therefore concluded that the suffering of the human body did not affect the divine soul of Christ.<sup>58</sup> Cyril of Alexandria expressed how near suffering could come to the Divinity according to the Alexandrian view: “The One being outside the suffering was in the suffering body”.<sup>59</sup> The Alexandrians could admit that God suffered in Christ, but paradoxically “in [an] impassible way”.<sup>60</sup>

Theodoret of Cyrus was a representative of the Antiochian School. The portal figure of the Antiochians before him was Theodore of Mopsuestia. Both Theodore and Theodoret were committed churchmen. Thus, they constantly had to relate their doctrine to the Biblical message of God that lives near and with his people, and of Christianity, as Theodore taught his catechumens, that is essentially directed towards heaven. With this orientation, he wanted to unite all of his theological work with his

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<sup>56</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 426.

<sup>57</sup> “Not surprisingly, God's ‘impassibility’ remained a key issue throughout the Christological debates of the next century (after the Nicaea). O’Keefe, John F., 359.

<sup>58</sup> Pihkala 2004, 214-215.

<sup>59</sup> Pihkala 2004, 241.

<sup>60</sup> Also, Cyril would allow the expression, “Christ suffered *φύσει τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος*, and will even concede that we can speak of a twofold *φύσις* in Christ. But the possibility of misinterpretation makes him cautious to express it.” Grillmeier 1975, 478.

proclamation.<sup>61</sup> This kind of theology was believed to have been formed from a living proclamation of the whole Church, and it was intended to be much more than a pure systematic analysis. Theodore's argumentation, according to this orientation, was based on two grounds: first, on a historical interpretation of the Bible, and second, on soteriological ideas (possibly originating from Origen). When trying to harness theology to serve the living proclamation of the Church, Theodore especially applied two kinds of Christological sayings from the Bible equally. In his interpretation of the Bible, he equally used both the sayings concerning Christ's human experiences and the sayings that reveal the divine presence and experiences. He formed the structure of his Christology accordingly, so that there is no clear predominance of Divinity found in his formulation, and human properties seem not to be inferior to divine ones. It has been proposed that he adopted two concepts from Origen. The first concept is that a human being with a soul and a body can participate in divine life, but only through the Christ. Origen thought that Christ himself had a body and a human soul (*anima mediatrix*). The second concept is that only as a real human being could Christ complete the atonement and be an example for all human beings.<sup>62</sup> From these principles, Christological work would naturally proceed to the conclusion that two complete beings, the *λόγος* and the *ἄνθρωπος*, are united without losing any of their properties. The uniting is not by "a mixture" (*κρᾶσις*), but by "a union" (*ἔνωσις*), which produces the new Person of Christ (*ἔνωσις κατὰ πρόσωπον*).<sup>63</sup>

In Antiochian Christology, subsequent to the living context of the proclamation, it is possible to see the continuous process of changing Christology. The real subject, either in Christ's divine or human acts, can be seen to change its place, especially depending on the context of Christ's life and acts. The subject in human and divine acts can be either one of his two natures or his person. Even though the Antiochians themselves asserted the real unity of Christ, due to their various standpoints, their opponents argued that the Antiochians advocated a total "separation" of Christ's natures instead of their "unity". Of course, this disagreement could partly be due to the inexact terminology of the time.<sup>64</sup> However, the problem arose from following

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<sup>61</sup> See Grillmeier 1975, 422.

<sup>62</sup> Pihkala 2004, 216.

<sup>63</sup> Pihkala 2004, 225.

<sup>64</sup> Pihkala 2004, 227.

the Antiochian understanding of the doctrinal standards. Even the very doctrinal expressions, such as the “communicatio idiomatum”,<sup>65</sup> may be expressed in different ways with regard to the two natures of Christ within the activities of the person (πρόσωπον). The Biblical names also had a crucial role in the communication of the different parts of Christ.

#### 1.4. Previous Research on Theodoret of Cyrus

István Pásztori-Kupán is one of the most prominent scholars who have studied the theology of Theodoret of Cyrus. The subject of his dissertation is *Theodoret of Cyrus's Double Treatise. On the Trinity and On the Incarnation: The Antiochene Pathway to Chalcedon*. Pásztori-Kupán gives a thorough picture of Theodoret's Trinitarian and Christological constructs. The results of his analyses form a starting point for understanding Theodoret's way of expressing the divine ἀπάθεια in his exegetical work on the Pauline Letters. Pásztori-Kupán has assessed that Theodoret's contribution, in the limits of the Antiochian tradition, supported the orthodoxy of the Church in every respect.<sup>66</sup> The perplexities that the Alexandrians saw in Theodoret's

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<sup>65</sup> The Christological concept of “communicatio idiomatum” refers to the relationship and exchange of properties between the two natures of Christ. In this study, this concept is important, though Theodoret himself usually would not mention it when indicating his two nature Christology. It is important to realise this structure in his Christology in order to understand how he describes the communication between Christ's divine and human nature. The two traditions he was working with had different roots. The roots of the Alexandrian position was in Athanasius' λόγος – σάρξ Christology. He argued that Christ must have full humanity for a soteriological reason, though the divine Logos in Christ was over-ruled his huminity. The divinity was Λόγος ἡγεμῶν. It also took part in impassioned events and so exchanging properties with humanity. Still, the Logos was not harmed or changed in any way. The communication of properties was to Athanasius a relationship, not change, between the divine and the human natures of Christ. The Antiochian Christology of Theodoret had its roots in the conceptions of Theodore of Mopsuestia. He was not so ready to confess the “hegemony” of the divine like the Alexandrians did. He thought that the divine Logos and its human nature (a man) were joined together not by mixing (κρᾶσις) but by a union (ἔνωσις). This union produces (ἀποτελεῖν) the new Person of Christ. Thus, Theodore was not willing to admit a communication of properties in his Christology. He rather emphasized the twoness in Christ. From these roots the theologians developed their concepts by trying to indicate both divine immutability and, at the same time, God's involvement in human life.

Theodoret, who followed the tradition of the two nature (λόγος - ἄνθρωπος) Christology, had to work hard to find a way to express God's personal involvement in human life and, at the same time, to save the Antiochian concept of the two perfect natures of Christ. He managed to do so through his exegesis, as we will see, in his own personal way. On Theodore, see Pihkala 2004, 222-227.

<sup>66</sup> Donald Fairbairn refers to Marijan Mandac who has evaluated in his bibliographical article (1971) the former research with their conception of Theodoret's orthodoxy. He summarises by assessing that there are scholars who see Theodoret as not locating the person of Christ in the Logos or who evaluate Theodoret to share the Antiochian two nature Christology practically in the way as Nestorius did.

Christology can simply be explained by his rigid concern to defend the Church's orthodox faith against heresies as well as to defend the unity of the Church. For the purposes of this study, it is useful to note the outlines that Pásztori-Kupán offers of Theodoret's conception of *ἀπάθεια* in his studies of Theodoret's former works on the Trinity and Christology. First of all, he assesses that Theodoret concluded to exclude the possibility of God being totally without emotions. He sees that Theodoret describes God's involvement in acts of salvation all too “vividly” to be one who supports the concept of God's incapability of emotions. Pásztori-Kupán also has not found traces of the idea of divine *ἀπάθεια* that would imply God's inability to partake in human suffering.<sup>67</sup>

When he comes to the structure of Theodoret's Christology, Pásztori-Kupán agrees with the statement that it is difficult to picture Theodoret as presenting a clear *communicatio idiomatum* in Christ. Consequently, if the two natures in Christ completely lacked communication, this would lead to separation in which the divinity is totally incapable of having human experiences, such as passions and mutability. However, Pásztori-Kupán does not agree with the assertion that Theodoret's Christology expressed the total separation of natures. Theodoret's light emphasis on *communicatio idiomatum*, according to Pásztori-Kupán, is only an indication of his consistency with his time and tradition, like other Fathers when hesitating to admit the concept. The expression “*communicatio idiomatum*” was neither generally used nor defined as orthodox before the council of Chalcedon.<sup>68</sup>

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These theologians are Bertram (1883), Ehrhard (1888), Lebon (1930), Jüssen (1935), Mazzarino (1941), Montalverne (1948), Nicolas (1951), Camelot (1951-4), Diepen (1953), McNamara (1955) and Šagi-Bunić (1963). And secondly, those scholars seeing Theodoret locate the person in Christ according to his divine nature, or simply evaluating him without no doubt in orthodox doctrine, Mahé (1906), Tixeront (1922), d'Alès (1931), Opitz (1935), Bardy (1946), Moeller (1944-5), Prestige (1948), Daniélou (1956), Canivet (1958) and Liébaert (1965). Two researchers, Richard (1936) and Grillmeier (1965) have evaluated to support the conception according to which Theodoret, having started being close to Nestorian but finally ended up locating the person of Christ in the Logos. Fairbairn 2007, 105.

<sup>66</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 32.

<sup>67</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 32.

<sup>68</sup> “In the first half of the fifth century and even in 451 both the theological heritage of Theodoret and the universally accepted standards of faith pronounced themselves clearly against any idea which later became known as *communicatio idiomatum*. Further, apart from the impressive elaboration of this doctrine by John of Damascus and especially by Thomas Aquinas, no ecumenical or regional church council has ever included this teaching among the elements of *fides recta*. Therefore, it is far to determine that the charge brought against any theologian of the Ephesian-Chalcedonian period, concerning their failure to apply this doctrine in their Christology, is anachronistic.” Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 142.

Pásztori-Kupán also has given some examples of *communicatio idiomatum* in Theodoret's Christology. Unlike other scholars, he even asserts that, in some cases, the concept is clearly a theological factor for Theodoret. Pásztori-Kupán sees Theodoret expressing undeniable *communication idiomatum* in describing the resurrection. Theodoret puts Christ's two natures in close interaction when he describes how "the manhood of Christ receives the impassibility from the Divinity of Christ".<sup>69</sup> This is interesting for the present study on Theodoret's interpretation of *ἀπάθεια* in the Pauline letters. It is necessary to see how this interpretation of the close interaction of the natures is related to the motive that guides Theodoret's presentation of *ἀπάθεια*. Pásztori-Kupán has paid attention to Theodoret's expression of "the Word appropriating (*οἰκείοῦται*) the wretchedness (*τῇν ἐντελείαν*) of the form of the servant". Pásztori-Kupán sees this expression as an important step towards the subsequently developing idea of the *communicatio idiomatum*. Although Theodoret was careful to attribute the divine and human properties correctly to each nature in Christ, he still expressed the participation of the divine in human experiences by *οἰκείωσις* (appropriation). In conclusion, Pásztori-Kupán argues that it is possible to define Theodoret's conception of *communicatio idiomatum* as peculiar. Theodoret is not able, as his contemporaries were not able, to express it in the manner of later theology. It was only the achievement of a positive evolution, which led up to Chalcedon, that provided the basis for the mature fruit of communication of properties in the unity of Christ.

Another modern esteemed scholar, Paul B. Clayton Junior, emphasizes other aspects of Theodoret's Christology than Pásztori-Kupán. Clayton appreciates the significance of Theodoret's contribution and admits that Theodoret had an important role in the development of the Christological formulation. His importance was undeniably true throughout his whole career, from before the council of Ephesus (431) until the events of the council of Chalcedon (451). Clayton has thoroughly studied Theodoret's Christology and has tried to concentrate on all source material that has something to say regarding Theodoret's Christological understanding. Based on his broad analysis, he contends that Theodoret's works were consistent from his younger age to theological maturity. According to Clayton, the main

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<sup>69</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 139.

principles of Theodoret's theology did not change. He preserved the traditional Antiochian "two nature Christology" and, as a matter of fact, even the "two subject Christology".<sup>70</sup> In other words, Clayton did not find real evolution in Theodoret's Christology, at least on the ontological level. All claimed progress was only "nominal" and not real. If there is change, it is located in the terminology. Clayton frequently sees it appropriate to describe Theodoret's concepts through categorical Antiochian concepts. Clayton asserts that his work (on Theodoret's Christology) demonstrates that Theodoret's Antiochian Christology was rooted in the traditional concern to "maintain the impassibility" of God the Word. There is no sign that the Word was capable of experiencing the human passions of growth, learning, temptation, hunger, thirst, fear, and death on the cross.<sup>71</sup>

Clayton holds that Theodoret asserted, in accordance with the Antiochian tradition, that it was "the human nature" with "body" and "soul" that was the only subject of human experiences. Clayton also sees this as one answer to the Arian problem. He reflects his position against Francis Sullivan's definition of the difference between the Antiochian and the Alexandrian method of solving the Arian problem. According to Sullivan, both the Antiochians and the Alexandrians changed the original structure of the "Arian syllogism" in different ways. In its original form, the major premise of the "Arian syllogism" was that "the Word was the subject even of the human operations and suffering of Christ". The minor premise was that "whatever was predicated to the Word must be predicated to him according to His divine nature (*κατα φύσιν*)". The Arian conclusion was that the "Word's divine nature was limited and affected by the human operations and suffering of Christ". Sullivan argues that the Alexandrians rejected the minor premise and anchored themselves to the major one, that is, to the notion that human operations and suffering are predicated to Christ the Word as the subject of Christ. The Antiochians solved the problem of

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<sup>70</sup> At the Council of Chalcedon, the consistency of "two-nature -Christology" was seen in all the former councils. The doctrine was claimed to have been established through the common Creeds. Pope Leo I states in his letter to Flavianus: "These three statements wreck the tricks of nearly every heretic. When God is believed to be both almighty and Father, the Son is clearly proved to be co-eternal with him, in no way different from the Father, since he was born God from God, almighty from the Almighty, co-eternal from the Eternal, not later in time, not lower in power, not unlike in glory, not distinct in being. The same eternal, only-begotten of the eternal begetter was born of the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary. His birth in time in no way subtracts from or adds to that divine and eternal birth of his: but its whole purpose is to restore humanity, who had been deceived, so that it might defeat death and, by its power, destroy the devil who held the power of death." Tomus ad Falavianum, URL: [http://patristica.net/451\\_tomus&e&e&en](http://patristica.net/451_tomus&e&e&en)

<sup>71</sup> Clayton 2007, 283-288.



Arianism by rejecting the major premise. They refused to predicate human limitations, passion, and the death of Christ to the Word and were anchored to the minor premise. According to Clayton, Theodoret's oeuvre does not even hint at the possibility of denying the minor premise, and it contains no example of the acceptance that the acts of human nature could also be predicated to the Word.<sup>72</sup>

Clayton asserts that philosophical orientation was the obstacle to all Antiochians, including Theodoret, to predicate human passibility to the Word. Clayton sees that they were philosophically limited in their sayings about God. He defines Theodoret's Christology in a soteriological sense:

We have seen how Theodoret's Christology is such a “two subject Christology” up through the Nestorian crisis. We have seen how it was rooted in both the Arian syllogism's philosophical assumptions and the other Antiochian concern. They are to assert firmly that for genuine human redemption to have occurred, it was necessary that there be in the life of Jesus the Christ a genuinely free human soul, which could experience temptation just as do the rest of us and resist.<sup>73</sup>

Clayton concludes that there are “two subjects”, the “Word” and “homo assumptus”, and a “prosopic” type of union in Theodoret's Christology. The “humanity assumed” has free will and is voluntarily obedient to the Word. Clayton sees a change in Theodoret's terminology after his reconciliation with Cyril in 435. Since then he emphasised unity in Christ more firmly, but still a union preserved as a “prosopic” union. Clayton does not find Christological evolution on an ontological level. He only finds change on a terminological level due to changing political factors and Theodoret's concern for unity of the Church.

Clayton admits that, if there is a union in Theodoret's Christology, then it is formed on the concept of “*πρόσωπον*”. Both mortal and immortal expressions are directed to “*πρόσωπον*”, and Christ is not equated with the Word. Clayton does not see much difference between Nestorius' and Theodoret's Christologies. He claims that Theodoret was driven by Cyril to develop Antiochean Christology as far as it would go in the limits of its philosophical presuppositions. These limits were the Neo-Platonic convictions of the perfect “impassibility” of the Word and “immutability”, which are far from the biblical God who cares and suffers. In Clayton's view, the

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<sup>72</sup> Clayton 2007, 284.

<sup>73</sup> Clayton 2007, 284.

divine nature is not affected in Theodoret's Christology. Neither was there an ontological union in Christ to provide a ground for *communicatio idiomatum*. He also does not see any real evolution in Theodoret's Christology. It is important to note that Clayton identifies a thorough change of terminology, just at the time when the primary source of this study, *The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, was written. When analysing this writing, he went so far as to say: "It is equally clear, again, that anyone coming to this material without having first seen what 'the Christ', for example, meant to Theodoret earlier, could very easily find here a Christology of genuine hypostatic union".<sup>74</sup>

Clayton raises another interesting point concerning the concept of *ἀπάθεια* in Theodoret's Christology. To Clayton, it seems obvious that Theodoret's terminology and expressions have completely changed to parallel Alexandrian One-subject Christology, especially beginning with Theodoret's commentary on the Pauline Letters. Clayton contends that Theodoret made no changes to support the real union in Christ, which would have provided the ground for the conception that human experiences could be addressed also to the Logos as a person. Clayton's argument is that Theodoret does not deny the former Antiochean expressions. And yet, he does not necessarily totally deny the addressing of passible events to Christ as a person. Clayton's point raises the question regarding the nature of Theodoret's concept of the union of *πρόσωπον*. It may be more ontological than Clayton claims it to be. He admits that, through names, Theodoret even acknowledges the communication of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*), but he says that it has no ontological structure.

In accordance with Pásztori-Kupán, and against Clayton, the Finnish scholar Juha Pihkala notes a clear evolution in Theodoret's Christology and, at the same time, in the entire Antiochian theology. He asserts that Theodoret alone gave a valuable contribution to the process of orthodox consensus at Chalcedon. He was "a moderate Antiochian", "profoundly sophisticated" and continued in his teachers' tradition, especially Theodor of Mopsuestia. Pihkala asserts that Theodoret started, with others, to develop the extreme "separation Christology". However, what is important for this study is Theodoret's contribution that led to a clear evolution in the Antiochian Christological formulation towards the Christology of the "two in

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<sup>74</sup> Clayton 2007, 206, 284, 286.

one” -concept. In addition, the achievement was, without a doubt, an important step in the process of finding the real union of the two natures of Christ in Christology. Against Clayton, Pihkala describes an ontological change in Theodoret’s understanding. Unlike Theodore and Nestorius, Theodoret clearly states that the one common *πρόσωπον* is not something of a third entity that is above the divine Logos and the man in Christ. On the contrary, the fruit of his theological evolution is seen in the notion that it is precisely the *πρόσωπον* of the Logos that is expressed as the person of Christ. Pihkala proposes that Theodoret was going to Chalcedon only by the orthodox way. Pihkala even identifies obvious similarities to monophysitism in Theodoret’s thinking, in spite of many theoretical differences. Antiochian Christology is basically like Alexandrian Christology in spite of the profound interest in human nature. They both embody a “Christology from above” and understand Christ as divinely directed, the divine nature overwhelming the human nature. Pihkala also points out the evolution in the terminology of Theodoret’s Christology. In Theodoret’s early works, the terms *φύσις* and *ὑποστάσις* are almost the same entities and are used as synonyms to indicate Christ’s natures. In his later works, he defines latter closer to “*πρόσωπον*”, simply in the meaning of “person”. According to Pihkala, Theodoret had a clear understanding of the difference regarding to the natures and the union in the Person of Christ. Still, Pihkala believes that the subject nature of the incarnated Son of God remains obscure.<sup>75</sup>

Pihkala presents an interesting view of Theodoret’s Christological structure. He suggests that Theodoret alone developed the Antiochian “separation Christology” to be more in line with a “union Christology”. This means that he moved to the understanding that provided suitable grounds for expressions like “God being involved in passion”. If the unity of the duality became real, it is possible to say that the Logos was present in the suffering of Christ. Pihkala holds the view that Theodoret himself did realise that there was not a big difference between Alexandrian and Antiochian terminology.<sup>76</sup> However, Theodoret was still unable to accept the Cyrillian explanation of how the *hypostatic union* was born. According to Pihkala, Theodoret seemed to fear that if Cyril’s explanation was accepted, there

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<sup>75</sup> Pihkala 2004, 248-255.

<sup>76</sup> Theodoret emphasises (in “Refutation of Cyril’s Twelve Anathemas”) that the terminology applied by the Antiochians is not so far from that of the Alexandrians. Pihkala 2004, 249. See also ACO I, 1/6, Nr. 169:23-24, s. 116, 15-117, 18.

would be the danger that God's free will would be limited. Theodoret seems to have fully refuted the possibility that the union in Christ would become real on the level of "natures" (*φύσεις*), that is, per Alexandrian terms, on the level of *ὑποστάσεις*.<sup>77</sup> If it were possible, Theodoret would have argued for the opinion that the whole process of incarnation was imperative to Christ. His free will would not have any space, and God's voluntary love would be limited.<sup>78</sup>

I want to note two more esteemed treatises on Theodoret's oeuvre. Aloys Grillmeier, S.J., concludes that it is impossible to understand Theodoret's theological presentation by neglecting the reality of evolution in his works. He asserts that it was not only an evolution but "a fundamental shift" that occurred in Theodoret's Christology during his life. Grillmeier distinguishes a clear antithesis between the young and old Theodoret. He justifies his position by first appealing to Theodoret's early writing of *Refutation of Cyril's Twelve Anathemas*. Grillmeier refers to Theodoret's accusation that Cyril of Alexandria is, as a matter of fact, himself "the inventor" of the conception of "the hypostatic unity" (*καθ' ὑποστάσιν*). Although Cyril argued that his expression derives from Church tradition, Theodoret replies that there is no mention of it in the Scriptures nor in the Fathers. Theodoret made this statement in February 431. Grillmeier claims that the progress of which he is talking about took place after 431 and that its final result can be seen in the third dialogue of *Eranistes*. In *Eranistes*, Theodoret already combined the Antiochian *πρόσωπον* and the Alexandrian *ὑποστάσις* since they are expressed as virtually identical. Grillmeier asserts that the term *ὑποστάσις* had finally acquired real positive significance in Theodoret's Christological structure leading up to the council of Chalcedon. After Chalcedon, in the letter to John of Aegea, Grillmeier sees the mature fruit of evolution in practice when Theodoret began presenting Scriptural proof for the concept of *ὑποστάσις*. Still, he would have needed more time and strength to make it entirely his own throughout his whole theology.<sup>79</sup> This means that it will take thorough work to define Theodoret's understanding of God's impassibility if Theodoret had evolved his terminology more than he did in his real conceptions.

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<sup>77</sup> *Φύσεις* and *ὑπόστασις* were synonyms to Theodoret at that time.

<sup>78</sup> This kind of expression is not suitable to reflect the process of incarnation because the inhumanation of "God-Logos" derives, according to New Testament, from God's merciful love and his free conscious decision. Pihkala 2004, 249.

<sup>79</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 489-490.

To put it more clearly, Grillmeier claims that the main weakness in Theodoret's Christology is his expression of the subject of Christ. However, he considers this weakness to be nearly removed in the latest works of Theodoret. According to Grillmeier, Theodoret eventually succeeded in presenting the real unity of Christ. Theodoret's new idea could be explained as divinity and manhood together "in one countenance". The unity is presented as "mutual interpenetration". However, this is also a decisive weakness. The common subject in Theodoret's Christology, according to Grillmeier, may be Christ, but it is not the Logos. Grillmeier asserts that Theodoret cannot identify two different categories of expressions: "first that which ascribes something of the Logos as the possessive and effective subject and the other which ascribes something of the Logos as of his essential nature". It was only in his later works that he could overcome this weakness. Grillmeier concludes:<sup>80</sup>

The incomplete, symmetrical conception of Christ, in which the *ὑπόστασις* of the Logos does not come fully into its own, does not, however, seem to have been the last stage in Theodoret's development. In two letters, which were written in 449 during his internment, his concept of *πρόσωπον* was given a yet deeper interpretation. The unity of subject and of Person in Christ is very finely and clearly expressed.<sup>81</sup>

Thus far, we have reviewed interpretations of Theodoret's Christology that present either varied views of an evolution in Theodoret's theology or varied views of his concept of the ontological union in Christ. The following study brings a new aspect to this discussion. Donald Fairbairn rejects the whole theory of evolution. He asserts that the perplexities of Theodoret's Christology can be interpreted to stem from a fundamental inconsistency that is present at all times in Theodoret's life, rather than from doctrinal evolution. This inconsistency appears when Theodoret deals with the Christ's incarnation and crucifixion. Fairbairn proposes that Theodoret usually describes the "Logos" as the personal subject of Christ, but at times when Theodoret discusses on the death of Christ, his strong view of divine "impassibility" leads him to see the personal subject as "the man Jesus" who undergoes suffering and death. Fairbairn, in agreement with Pásztori-Kupán, is also convinced that the early church was not content to simply say (ambiguously) that Christ was "one *ὑποστάσις*" or "one *πρόσωπον*". Instead, the Church sought to understand whether the one who acted and to whom the specifically human experiences are to be accorded was the

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<sup>80</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 488-495.

<sup>81</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 494.

man Jesus or God the Logos.<sup>82</sup> Accordingly, it was not exceptional to be inconsistent in one's Christological expression. Fairbairn asserts that it is not wrong to make the generalisation that scholars who see Theodoret as not locating the personal subject of Christ in the Logos are those who pay the most attention to his writings on the death of Christ. They do not concentrate on the writings concerning the incarnation *per se*.<sup>83</sup>

One important argument against evolution in Theodoret's Christological thinking is that, according to Fairbairn, Theodoret himself denies it. Instead, it is plausible that Theodoret modified his terminology without thinking that such modifications constituted a change. In conclusion, Fairbairn sees different kinds of structures of Christology in Theodoret's conceptions of incarnation and suffering. The divinity is expressed both as the subject of passible experiences of the incarnation and not as the subject of passible experiences of the crucifixion.

In its first centuries, the Church had to survive in a strong philosophical atmosphere and had to cope with it. Theodoret, with his good education, was one of the most talented Fathers to meet the challenge. Niketas Siniossoglou claims that Theodoret only practiced the Christian mission with his philosophical work. He and many others evaluate Theodoret's work *Graecarum Affectionum Curatio* to be "one of the best Christian replies to pagan philosophy". Theodoret quotes more than one hundred secular writers in the work, and his argumentation is almost entirely based on these secular writings that are highly respected by the non-Christian community.<sup>84</sup> According to Siniossoglou, Theodoret, as the matter of fact, practiced the rhetorical and exegetical tactics of the Antiochians against Neo-Platonic hermeneutics. He did so in order to negate the possibility of a coherent Platonist philosophical theology. He broke its unity and its most vital elements. Theodoret's strategy was to present the later philosophical theology of the Hellenes as alienated from Plato's philosophy. Using anti-Hellenic rhetoric, Theodoret intended to break the 'golden chain' of Platonism at the philosophical level by asserting that Plato was a monotheist and that his successors were polytheists and apostates. He separated the ritualistic expression

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<sup>82</sup> Fairbairn 2007, 100-101.

<sup>83</sup> "Thus Romanides believes that Theodoret always refused to locate the person of Christ in God the Logos." Fairbairn, Donald 2007, 107.

<sup>84</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 85; Siniossoglou 2008, 2.

of pagan religiosity from its philosophical framework.<sup>85</sup> The purpose of Theodoret's philosophical argumentation was completely apologetical. He did not consciously assimilate philosophical conceptions into fundamental Christian thought. On the contrary, he gives clear warning for such assimilation. He says that Hellenic *παιδεία* (teaching) may be assimilated into Christianity only by *δια παιδευσιν* (formal teaching), which means that both the teacher and the student accept that *παιδεία* only has a formal, instrumental and educational function.<sup>86</sup> In *Graecarum Affectionum Curatio*, Theodoret explicitly seems to express that, for him, philosophy is an instrumental tool for apologetic theology.<sup>87</sup> If the mission to use all tools for Christian apology is obvious in Theodoret's works, it should be noted when evaluating his conception of philosophical concepts like *ἀπάθεια*.

When Theodoret begins his Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul, he says that its purpose is to offer “apostolic wisdom” (*τῆς ἀποστολικῆς σοφίας*) to the readers. He confesses that the wisdom is not his own and that, similarly, the wisdom does not belong to any other interpreter of the Scriptures. He describes this notion through a metaphor: “So it is out of place for us, too, like some kind of mosquito, to buzz about the apostolic meadows along with those famous bees.”<sup>88</sup> His presentation is humble, which is possibly due to his uncertainty about working on the Pauline letters. It is obvious that, given the tension in the church, he expected to receive criticism against all his theological works from his opponents. Naturally, the consciousness of this hard reality forced Theodoret to keep all doctrinal tensions in mind when working. Although the commentary is not meant to be a doctrinal presentation, it is possible to see Theodoret's moderate theological conceptions in the work. The other reason for

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<sup>85</sup> Siniosoglou 2008, 3, 4, 105

<sup>86</sup> Siniosoglou 2008, 241.

<sup>87</sup> Clayton gives a different view of Theodoret's philosophical orientation when analysing Theodoret's early Christology. He sees Theodoret arguing only for a specific philosophical point of view. The principle behind Theodoret's expression is “the Stoic doctrine of being” of the properties of natures. His main concern is to protect the immutable properties of nature in the union in Christ. Clayton 2007, 99-100. Nemesius of Emesa's concept of the Stoic mixture has been evaluated to be more common among the Fathers. Wolfson puts it as follows: “According to this interpretation of the Stoics, the Stoic statement is that the mixture was the mutual coextension of bodies into one another at all points, without losing any of the qualities which belong to them by nature, must have been taken to mean that the bodies in their infinite divisibility may enter into one another at an infinite number of points and thus form a juxtaposition at a potentially infinite number of imperceptible points.” Wolfson 1976, 382. Clayton asserts that Theodoret's Christology, as an Antiochian Christology in general, “is conceived in terms of the limitations which the doctrine or philosophy 'of being' puts on understanding what God has willed to accomplish for our salvation in Christ”. Clayton assesses that Theodoret had no other possibilities but was locked in this metaphysics: speaking of the Word is to speak according to its own proper divine nature (*καθ' οὐσίαν ἢ κατὰ φύσιν*). Clayton 2007, 99.

<sup>88</sup> *Ad Psalms II*, 36. Trans. Hill.

Theodoret's humbleness is his spiritual consciousness of the total dependence on God's divine grace when working on the Holy Scriptures (τῇν Θείαν γραφήν). He expresses God's transcendence and God's message as incomprehensible to an interpreter through his own skill. Without grace, the interpreter can only scratch the surface, while the deeper message remains behind a veil. The only possibility to understand is for the interpreter to have aid from God. God's grace (τῆς Θείας Χάριν ἀντιβολῶν) can be a light of the mind (τοῦ νοεροῦ φῶτος). For Theodoret, understanding the deeper message of Scripture is very similar to reaching the goal of salvation.

To conclude, former research on Theodoret's Christology gives various, even opposing, assessments of Theodoret's Christological structure and of his concept of ἀπάθεια that concerns the structure. In Pásztori-Kupán's presentation, we find Theodoret as a faithful supporter of the orthodox faith of the Church and an important author on the theological agreement of Chalcedon. Similarly, Siniosoglou claims that Theodoret only practiced the Christian mission in his theological work and philosophical principles of God's impassibility. These were tools to get the mission work to its goal. With regard to this connection of the mission of the church and theology, Pásztori-Kupán also agrees with the statement that it is difficult to show that Theodoret presented a clear understanding of *communicatio idiomatum* in Christ. However, Pásztori-Kupán focuses on Theodoret's style of theological presentation and assesses that Theodoret vividly expresses God as having emotions and Christ's two natures as being in close interaction. He also does see evolution in Theodoret's Christology from Antiochian separation theology to Chalcedonian union Christology.

Clayton has a different emphasis in comparison to Pásztori-Kupán. He does not see the evolution in Theodoret's Christology. Clayton defines Theodoret's Christology through the "two subject Christology" and does not see any difference between it and Nestorian concepts. Clayton contends that Theodoret's Antiochian Christology was rooted in the traditional concern of philosophy to "maintain the impassibility" of God the Word. He does not see any indication in Theodoret's thinking, that the Word was capable of experiencing any human passions. In Clayton's opinion, only Theodoret's terminology and expressions changed to parallel Alexandrian One-



subject Christology. In his opinion, this change took place just before Theodoret wrote his commentary on the Pauline Letters.

In accordance with Pásztori-Kupán, Juha Pihkala and Aloys Grillmeier note a clear evolution in Theodoret's Christology, not only in his terminology. Grillmeier even calls it a "fundamental shift". For example, early on, he does not use the term *hypostatic union*. Later, he ends up contending for it eagerly by his Biblical interpretation. Pihkala assesses that it was Theodoret alone who gave a crucial contribution to the evolution of Antiochian Christology leading up to the Chalcedonian conception. According to Grillmeier, Theodoret eventually succeeded in presenting the real unity of Christ. His notion of this unity can be expressed as divinity and manhood together "in one countenance" and as "mutual interpenetration". However, this may also be a decisive weakness in Theodoret's thinking. The real subject in Theodoret's Christology, according to Grillmeier, may be Christ, but not the Logos.

Fairbairn agrees with Clayton in rejecting the theory of doctrinal evolution, and instead proposes that the perplexities of Theodoret's Christology stem from inconsistency in his presentation. This inconsistency is clearly visible when Theodoret deals with Christ's incarnation and crucifixion. Fairbairn notes that Theodoret usually describes the "Logos" as the personal subject of Christ, but at times, when Theodoret discusses the death of Christ, his strong view of divine "impassibility" leads him to see the personal subject as "the man Jesus" who undergoes suffering and death. Fairbairn, in accordance with Pásztori-Kupán, is also convinced that the whole early church was not content to simply say (ambiguously) that Christ was "one *ὑποστάσις*" or "one *πρόσωπον*". Instead, the Church sought to understand whether it was the man Jesus or God the Logos who acted in various situations in Christ's life and death. Accordingly, it was not exceptional to have inconsistency in one's Christological expression. Fairbairn asserts that it is not wrong to make the generalisation that scholars who see Theodoret as not locating the personal subject of Christ in the Logos are those who pay the most attention to his writings on the death of Christ. They do not concentrate on the writings concerning the incarnation *per se*. In conclusion, Fairbairn identifies different structures of Christology in Theodoret's conceptions of incarnation and suffering.

Previous research does not identify any dissonance between Theodoret and the orthodox Trinitarian doctrine. The challenge for previous scholars has been Theodoret's Christological understanding on the unity and communication of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*) in Christ's person (πρόσωπα).

### **1.5. The Purpose, the Method and the Sources of this Research**

The purpose of this study is to define and describe the doctrine of “divine impassibility” (ἀπάθεια) in Theodoret of Cyrus' Biblical interpretation of the Pauline Letters. The aim is to find out the structure by which Theodoret answers the question, either implicitly or explicitly, whether God has emotions in his divine nature or not and whether God is affected by human experiences in any way, or does he remain totally immutable. Accordingly, if Theodoret contends that God has emotions or is affected, we need to understand what these emotions are and what is the real subject that is affected. If Theodoret contends that God is capable of suffering, we must define whether this unanimously denotes his voluntary act or his involvement in an affective act for another reason. If God accepts suffering, divine suffering needs to be defined, as opposed to human suffering. The motive for implementing an impassible act is also necessary to define in order to attain a complete picture of Theodoret's doctrine of God's ἀπάθεια. The analysis of this study will focus on the question, in the accordance with the original philosophical meaning of ἀπάθεια, whether God unanimously only executes (ποιεῖν) passible acts or whether he also affected (πάσχειν) by these acts simultaneously. To put it in a different way: are God's eternality, immutability and impassibility compatible with his having emotions and being in the passionate human life of Christ?

Previous research has come up with different kinds of evaluations of Theodoret's doctrine concerning the concept of God's ἀπάθεια and his Christological structure that forms the basis to understand his doctrine. On the one hand, some researches have excluded every possibility for God's divine nature to be without emotions (apathy) in Theodoret's thinking. They argue from Theodoret's vivid descriptions of God's involvement in acts of salvation. From this standpoint, the ἀπάθεια, meaning

total lack of emotions, does not seem obvious to them.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, the “separation Christology” of the Antiochians has been accused of allowing two subjects and even two persons in Christ. An ultimate two-part interpretation, according to these conceptions, would lead to address all possible experiences exclusively to Christ’s human nature.<sup>90</sup> Accordingly, there is no opportunity to address any human experiences to God’s divine nature. Thus, it is important to have a clear understanding of Theodoret’s doctrine of the Trinitarian and Christological structures, especially regarding the communication of properties between the two natures of Christ, i.e. *communicatio idiomatum*, that will receive great attention in this study.

Although Christology was the main issue of discussion in the time of Theodoret, it is important to analyse his Trinitarian standpoints, too. By this means, we may understand how Theodoret defines the properties of the divine nature such as eternity, immutability and impassibility in the Trinitarian unity. After this framework, it is necessary to analyse the doctrine of this same Trinitarian concept as applied to Theodoret’s Christological structure. The Trinitarian doctrine has, naturally, crucially affected Theodoret’s interpretation of Biblical narratives and descriptions, for example, of God taking the form of man. Immutability is challenged when describing the process of forming the union of two natures in the one person of Christ. Paradoxically, the Fathers tried to present how God could be both a possible man and an impassible divine God in the very same person of Christ. The Chalcedonian form of Christology was seen as the mature orthodox doctrine in the time of Theodoret. It expressed, in a commonly accepted way, both the two-part structure of natures and the real unity in the person of Christ. In this study, I will indicate whether the same structure prevails already in Theodoret’s former writing of the commentary on the Pauline Letters, too. If the Christological maturity of the Chalcedonians existed also in Theodoret’s commentary on Pauline Letters, written before the council, it will secure Theodoret’s central role in promoting orthodox concepts to commonly accepted Chalcedonian “one person with two natures” Christology. The result of this analysis will also reveal Theodoret’s own concept of

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<sup>89</sup> See Pásztori-Kupán p.27. A few scholars have noticed that it is either the univocal concept of God’s impassibility or the univocal concept of God’s possibility that leads to many theological difficulties. Gavriluk 2006, 5.

<sup>90</sup> See Clayton 2007, 25.

*ἀπάθεια*. I will bring forth the question of whether he had already expressed both the *unity* and the *two nature structure* in one person of Christ in the way that the communication of properties ( *ommunication idiomatum*) between the two natures of Christ took place.

The method of this study will be a systematic analysis. In the first stage, I will analyse Theodoret's terms and exegetical method in order to have the proper tools to proceed with a structural analyses on his Trinitarian and Christological doctrines. The analysing on the profound meaning of the terms and exegesis will require a broader range of source material from the Antiochian heritage, more so than only the primary sources of this study. In addition, this study will present Theodoret's exegetical method with an informative glimpse at his other commentaries when needed. The terminology will be thoroughly analysed to decipher Theodoret's challenging situation in the debates of the time.

In order for him to take the surrounding tensions into account, Theodoret had to use a variety of terms and methods in his interpretations. Scholars have claimed that, for Theodoret, the "goal often determinates [the] tools." Theodoret has also been claimed to use the method of the "opposite cures the mistakes".<sup>91</sup> He was almost continually living in the middle of two tensions: the tension between the church and the philosophical pagan world and the continuous political tensions of the church between *monophysite* Alexandrian theology and his own Antiochian *duophysite* theology. In the context of these tensions and even fights, he had to formulate his expressions carefully and sometimes even inconsistently in order to reach the established goals of Christian apology and protecting Antiochian two nature Christology. He also tried to do this in the way that his work would build more unity than tear arguing parties apart. These tendencies and contexts are accounted for in the analysis, though his Biblical commentaries contain less polemic words than his doctrinal treatises. When necessary, the analysis will consider other source material from Theodoret, as well as source material from his predecessors, as clarifying information.

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<sup>91</sup> *On Psalms II*, 95-96. Trans. Hill.

The analysis of Theodoret's Trinitarian and Christological doctrines will begin with his former doctrinal presentations of *De Trinitate* and *De Incarnatione*. This framework is necessary in order to understand his vivid exegesis of the Pauline Letters. In this study, Christological events will also be analysed separately to form a complete picture and a consistent define of the conception. This is necessary because the results of previous research concerning Theodoret's concept of *ἀπάθεια* and *communicatio idiomatum* have been presented in different ways depending on the stages of Christ's life as a human being.<sup>92</sup>

The question can also be expressed as to what extent can divine nature come into human passion. This is a question that concerns God's transcendence and immanence. Theodoret's work on this subject will reveal whether he considers there to be an ontological union between the two natures of Christ, which in turn will show whether he allows any possibility of divine presence in passions and whether he manages to protect divine immutability in this structure. It is important to find out how Theodoret presents the Christological union in his Commentary on the Pauline Letters.

The primary source material, "*The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*", is handled in this study as a single intact presentation of the author. Theodoret wrote the commentary without trying to give every letter its independent theological presentation. He comments on all the letters in order to complete the whole of the doctrinal material in the Commentary. Of course, there are emphases in each letter that allow them to contribute more to different subject that are naturally found in their message. For example, the Letter to Romans entails the duty to give the disposition and motive to salvation history as "a divine plan". The Letters to the Corinthians complete the plan for their part, and all of the letters have their own contribution in the compiled presentation of Theodoret's commentary. The Letter to the Hebrews, which Theodoret attributes to the Apostle Paul, gives valuable material for establishing a unity between the New and the Old Testaments. The Letter to the Philippians is an important source for clarifying Theodoret's conception on *κένωσις*, i.e. the confinement of the very core of incarnation, Logos assuming the passible human nature of Christ.

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<sup>92</sup> See p. 31-32

After presenting Theodoret's Trinitarian and Christological doctrines and his concept on divine impassibility within these doctrines, it is necessary to analyse his argumentation on the subject of divine impassibility. This will be done by concentrating on six of Theodoret's arguments on God's impassible presence in passible human life. These arguments are the "Divine plan", the "free will of man", "*communicatio onomaton*", the "sacramental argument", "typological exegesis" and "deification".

## 2. THEODORET'S TRINITARIAN AND CHRISTOLOGICAL TERMS AND EXEGESIS

### 2.1. The Context of the General Confusion of the Terms

The exact meaning of many of the terms used in the discussions at Nicaea in 325 and afterwards were often unclear to speakers, especially to those of languages other than Greek. Greek words like essence (*οὐσία*), substance (*ὑποστάσις*), nature (*φύσις*) and person (*πρόσωπον*) bore a variety of meanings that were drawn primarily from pre-Christian philosophers. The logic of the different theologians is not always compatible.<sup>93</sup> In this situation, misunderstandings were unavoidable. The term "coessential / consubstantial" (*ὁμοούσιος*), in particular, was as an issue for many bishops because of its associations with Gnostics (who used it generally in their theology). As a matter of fact, *ὁμοούσιος* is the term that was condemned at the Synods of Antioch in 264–268. The confusion especially surrounding this term was crystalized in the Christological debates of the late fourth and early fifth centuries. The 'schools' asserted their own expressions, using terms that were understood differently by their opponents. It was precisely Theodoret's consistency in his usage and correction of the terms that has been held as one of his most valuable

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<sup>93</sup> Christophe Erismann makes the following statement about Christian logic from a historical viewpoint: "When speaking of the history of logic in a Christian context, it is important to distinguish two groups of authors, Christian Neo-Platonic philosophers who were generally members of the School of Alexandria, and who did not write Theological works but authored commentaries on Aristotle; and secondly, theologians who appealed to Aristotelian logic in order to clarify the terminology and strengthen the reasoning of their theological treatises." Erismann, Christophe, "Maximus the Confessor on the logical dimension of the structure of reality." in *The Architecture of the Cosmos*. Ed. by Antoine Levy et.al. Luther-Agricola-Society: Helsinki 2015 (51-69), 53.

contributions to theological development. Theodoret is seen to have terminologically harmonized theological tradition in a time when a whole range of old orthodox terms was seriously questioned. Of course, he himself was also involved in the theological debates and has his own limitations too. Although he aimed at consistency in the use of theological terms, the very meaning of one particular term may have received new nuances that rose from his theological discussions. In relation to this study, concerning God's impassibility, it is necessary to note some specific terminological confusions of the time. For example, the concepts like *hypostatic union* and *communicatio idiomatum*, which were consigned to expressions concerning *Theopaschism* (God's passibility), had not reached the status of being established as tradition in Theodoret's time, but were still innovative.<sup>94</sup> Theodoret, among others, undeniably shifted his terminology and language, although this shift may have been due to his aim to reach unity in the Church through polite expressions. At the least, this is seen in the progress that took place in his consideration to the concept of *hypostatic union*.<sup>95</sup> However, the evolution has been evaluated in different ways. The study by recent theologians has approached the matter from varying standpoints and consequently has found different kinds of results.<sup>96</sup>

It was not until the council of Chalcedon that the Fathers succeeded in finding commonly accepted content for their doctrinal statements that were the main features of the competing traditions at the council. Alexandrians brought their “*λόγος - σάρξ*” Christology to the table. Through this expression, they presented a structure in which there was one unambiguous subject, the Logos. This predication prevailed even after the incarnation. The unity was presented without any confusion between two natures of Christ, but at times at the cost of diminishing the humanity of Christ. The Antiochians brought to the same doctrinal table their *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος* Christology, in which two perfect natures of Christ were unambiguously presented. At times, this presentation seemed to diminish the unity. To come to a common agreement, Chalcedonian theologians produced the new concept of “*λόγος - ἄνθρωπότης*”. According to this new concept, “Word the God” was united with “manhood”. In other words, “One and the Same” is considered “in two natures”. In addition, the term “*Θεοτόκος*” was commonly confessed again (in the Cyrillian sense). The

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<sup>94</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 77.

<sup>95</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 489-490.

<sup>96</sup> Clayton 2007, 168. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 31-33. Chadwick 1951, 158.

outlines of this “doctrinal corridor” of Chalcedon<sup>97</sup> were now clearly drawn by four adverbs concerning the natures: “unconfusably, immutably, indivisibly and inseparably”. The first pair of adverbs is intended for the Alexandrian extremity that is the heretic Eutychian conception of *monophysitism*. On the other hand, the second pair was meant to refute the Antiochian extremity of the Nestorian conception of extreme *duophysitism*, which was in danger to be interpreted as a dualism of persons in Christ.<sup>98</sup>

According to the presentation of the Chalcedonians, there is real union (ἔνωσις) in Christ, but it is not presented at the cost of removing the individual properties (ιδιότης) of either nature (φύσις). When evaluating the terminology of Theodoret of Cyrus in his Commentary on the Pauline Letters, it is important to note that all Chalcedonians required time to find satisfactory clarity in their terms concerning the communication between the humanity and divinity in Christ. Although the Chalcedonians were able to express unity through ὑπόστασις / πρόσωπον and duality through two οὐσίαι / φύσεις, it has been suggested that they all still had not reached the full potential of expressing *communicatio idiomatum* clearly. On the contrary, they were satisfied with presenting the unity and the duality separately, but they did not proceed with any attempt to integrate them together. The unity and duality were presented on different levels, and when they met, their definitions led to a paradox. It would not be fair to any theologian of the time to require that they express an entire and intact definition of how it is possible for the impassible divine nature to take upon himself the properties of the passible human nature and its experiences. This was not the achievement of the theologians of time of Chalcedon but was left to the task of theologians to come.<sup>99</sup>

The important achievement of the Council of Chalcedon was that it standardized the main Christological terms needed to express the understanding of each theologian. The source material of this study mainly belongs to the time before Chalcedon. Since Theodoret was one to promote the terminological process that led up to Chalcedon and since he accepted the decisions, it is only natural, if possible, to interpret his

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<sup>97</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 24.

<sup>98</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 23-24. Grillmeier 1975, 548-550. Pihkala 2004, 281-282.

<sup>99</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 23-24. Grillmeier 1975, 548-550. Pihkala 2004, 281-282.



terms in a Chalcedonian manner or at least as developing all the time towards Chalcedon.

## 2.2. The Trinitarian Terms

It was by the council of Constantinople in 381 that God's Trinitarian confining of *ὁμοούσιόν* / *ὁμοούσιός* was accepted. God's impassibility would accordingly be attributed to the entire Trinity. Theodoret presented this Trinitarian orthodox doctrine by using the vocabulary of the Cappadocian Fathers. They had taught that there is one *οὐσία* / *φύσις* and three *ὑποστάσεις* / *πρόσωπα* in God.<sup>100</sup> Regarding the concept of the Trinitary Theodoret was loyal to his heritage, but he, however, did not let this tradition captivate his presentations of Christology.<sup>101</sup> Accordingly, Theodoret used the terms *οὐσία* and *φύσις* consistently as synonyms in his Trinitarian expressions. The synonymous use of these two terms can be clearly seen prior to the Nestorian controversy. In Trinitarian terms, they especially denoted unity, since they represented the common essence and nature of the Triad. The three *ὑποστάσεις* are in total equality in the Triad for they equally have the same *οὐσία* and *φύσις*. The particular properties (*ιδιότης*) of each divine person are held by their *ὑπόστασις* or *πρόσωπον*. The divine essence or nature is totally opposite to the human nature. The divine *οὐσία* in orthodox faith was interpreted to be timeless, uncreated, omnipotent, incorporeal, infinite, immutable and impassible.<sup>102</sup>

In Greek, the word *πρόσωπον* originally meant 'a face', and it did not refer to a substance. It could also have the meaning 'a mask'.<sup>103</sup> However, both in Trinitarian and in Christological use it was given the ontological meaning of a person. After

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<sup>100</sup> "Cappadocians reverse Aristotle's pattern in which both types of entities (*koinon* and *idion*) are given the name *οὐσία* and in which primacy is attributed to individuals. They keep the distinction between particular and universal entities, but reformulate it in terms of a distinction between *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*. They state that the distinction between *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις* must be understood as analogous to the distinction between what is common (*koinonia*) and what is proper or particular (*idiom*), that is, as distinction between species and individual. Therefore there exist common entities – *οὐσίαις*- and particular entities – *ὑποστάσεις*." Erismann, Christophe, "Maximus the Confessor on the logical dimension of the structure of reality." in *The Architecture of the Cosmos*. Ed. by Antoine Levy et.al. Luther-Agricola-Society: Helsinki 2015 (51-69), 59.

<sup>101</sup> Although this canonical Cappadocian language of one *οὐσία* and three *ὑποστάσεις* was a part of Theodoret's Trinitarian terminology in general, he did not practice it loyally throughout all his Christological presentations. Daley, Brian E. 2007, 29. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 28.

<sup>102</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 29, 57. Grillmeier 1975, 490-491.

<sup>103</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 65. See also Prestige 1952, 157.

Sabellianism had presented the challenge of modalism, the Fathers had to make a clear contrast between the concept of the person (*πρόσωπον*) and its mask (*πρόσωπειαν*). They wanted to denote that the three *πρόσωπα* of the Trinity are not masks or outward countenances of one divine person. God does not change his ‘masks’ as the actors in different roles do, but he has three different persons. The definition was clear enough to sustain the validity of *πρόσωπον* in its Trinitarian use. Although the term *ὑπόστασις* was later adopted, there was not a time that the orthodox Fathers discredited the term *πρόσωπον*.<sup>104</sup> It has also been argued that Theodoret did not employ *πρόσωπον* in his Trinitarian presentation in its ontological form, but that he only assumes it into his Christology from his Antiochian Christological heritage.<sup>105</sup> However, research has also proven that he applies the term to the Trinity too. In *Curatio*, Theodoret applies *πρόσωπα* in a presentation of the Trinity when he comments on Gen. 1:26-27 and some other passages. It has been noted that in *De Trinitate* Theodoret uses *πρόσωπα* three times in the sense of persons. On two occasions he uses it to distinguish the Son from the Father and once to denote the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The term also occurs in the *Expositio*, where it is used in parallel with the term *ὑπόστασις*.<sup>106</sup> This is very customary to Theodoret and reveals his intention to preserve the structure, the ground (*οὐσία*) and the three persons (*πρόσωπα*). The confusion and the shift of the place of the term *ὑπόστασις* in Theodoret’s presentation will be analysed further in this study.

### 2.3. The Christological Terms

Concerning the impassibility of the divine nature in Christological presentations, it is crucial to realize the meaning and connotations of the terms used. In order to express the two different natures of Christ, Theodoret has put the terms *οὐσία* and *φύσις* into use when describing the universal qualities of these two natures. However, the term *φύσις* occurs much more frequently. The emphasis on *φύσις* has been seen as an

<sup>104</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 66. Prestige 1952, 162.

<sup>105</sup> Montalverne 1948, 78.

<sup>106</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 66-67. The multifaceted connotations of the term *ὑπόστασις* are meritoriously disclosed in the light of Antiochian tradition by Geevarghese Chediath in his dissertation of “The Christology of Mar Babai the Great”. Mar Babai the Great (551-628) was educated in Nisibis and contributed largely to the teaching in Monasteries. He was “a total Theodorian (Theodore of Mopsuestia) in spirit and letter”. As the heirs of Theodore, both Theodoret of Cyrus and Mar Babai employ terms with great similarity. Chediath 1982, 4-8, 185. See the chapter 2.3. of this study.

indication of Theodoret's consistent Christological emphasis on the two natures Christology. However, the basic denotation of both terms is similar, since they both refer to two different entities in Christ, those of universal entities according to their natures. The entities are the uniting Godhead and the assumed manhood within Christ.<sup>107</sup>

When it comes to terms referring to unity, there are two important ones to deal with: *ὑπόστασις* and *πρόσωπον*. They both denote individual entities. Theodoret changed his position on *ὑπόστασις* during his career. His motive for this change was the great pressure put on him by the Alexandrians, for whom the term *ὑπόστασις* was the best means of expressing the unity. However, Theodoret had difficulties in finding an equal place with the Alexandrians regarding his notion of *ὑπόστασις*. He even had a hard time finding a proper place for it in his own pre-Ephesian Christology. For him, the primary term that expressed the unity was *πρόσωπον*. During his work on the Pauline Letters, it was impossible for him to employ the term *ὑπόστασις* when referring to Christ's person. He argued that the expression of the unity *καθ' ὑπόστασιν* was only a new invention by Cyril of Alexandria. For Cyril, oneness in Christ was unanimously *hypostatic*. In one *ὑπόστασις*, Cyril had proposed that both the human and the divine aspects were brought together in the sense of actual reality and in a sense of substantial existence as opposed to pure appearance. Anything predicated to the divine Word could also be predicated to the assumed humanity and vice versa by virtue of the single *ὑπόστασις*. Cyril's definition really was novel among the Fathers, and his use of *ὑπόστασις* was not consistent. Theodoret needed time to agree with the concept of the union on *ὑπόστασις*, and he did not do so until the time when the Chalcedonian council also agreed on the concept.<sup>108</sup>

Theodoret, for two reasons, refused to use the term *ὑπόστασις* as Cyril had meant it. First, he saw that there was a dissonance with the tradition of the Church and the Scriptures in Cyrillian interpretation. It was only after the council of Chalcedon that Theodoret could use it as a synonym with the Antiochian term *πρόσωπον*. Young

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<sup>107</sup> Theodoret's use these terms to represent the duality of the natures in Christ has been evaluated as one of his Christological strengths. When he consistently maintains these terms in his expressions, he essentially made a remarkable contrivance to the developments towards the commonly accepted Chalcedonian definition. Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 57. Grillmeier 1975, 490-491.

<sup>108</sup> Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 63-64. Russell 2000, 42-43. "In Cyril's terminology there is a certain fluidity, which could sometimes lead to uncertainty of meaning. Although in his Trinitarian theology *οὐσία / φύσις* is distinguished from *ὑπόστασις*, in his Christology *φύσις* is identified with *ὑπόστασις*. Moreover, the equivalence of *ὑπόστασις* and *πρόσωπον* is not absolute." Russell 2000, 26.

Theodoret especially used the term *ὑπόστασις* to refer only to Christ's duality, and he also used *ὑπόστασις* and *φύσις* as identical synonyms for a long period. This was the second reason why it was impossible for him to accept the expression of Christological unity through the term *ὑπόστασις*: he had also understood it to mean the unity by *φύσις*. The unity by one *φύσις* or *ὑπόστασις* in Christ did not mean anything to Theodoret other than Apollinarian monophysitism.<sup>109</sup> It is necessary to note these terminological tensions when analyzing the source material of this study. This primary source material was written in the middle of the "fundamental shift" of Theodoret's Christological presentation.<sup>110</sup> There were works that Theodoret composed during his early years like *De Trinitate* and *De Incarnatione*. In them, it is possible to see that he expressed his *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος* Christology consistently in the form of one *πρόσωπον* with two *φύσεις*, and he employed the terms *ὑπόστασις* and *πρόσωπον* only much later.<sup>111</sup> How did Theodoret use the terms at the time when he wrote most of his *commentaries*? In order to have a clear view of the evolutionary state of the terms, this question needs to be reflected on while analysing the source material.

After defining the terms that Theodoret used to express his Christological concept, it is necessary to understand the reasons why Theodoret so eagerly hesitated to accept any changes to his terminology. The deeper meaning of Theodoret's terms was not known to his opponents and sometimes to later scholars as well. In order to understand and interpret the deeper meaning and the main connotations of the terms that he used, it is essential to take a closer look at the Antiochian roots of these terms. Naturally, the most valuable sources for this work are provided by Theodoret's master, Theodore of Mopsuestia.

Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christological principles were formed to support the duality of the natures in Christ. Consequently, his use of terms carry connotations that supported the duality. At first glance, Theodore seems only to emphasise the

<sup>109</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 489. Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 64. See also PG 76, 400A.

<sup>110</sup> See p.30.

<sup>111</sup> Theodoret moved from one side to another gradually. A middle way of interpreting *ὑπόστασις* is expressed in *Eranistes*. In the third dialogue of *Eranistes*, *πρόσωπον* and *ὑπόστασις* were already practically used as synonyms. Theodoret interprets the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham in reference to Christ's two natures. Isaac and ram are the types of the two natures. Although the type has two different individuals, there are not two different persons in Christ. Here Theodoret uses the term *ὑπόστασις* to denote Christ's person and asserts, "*Κατὰ δὲ τὸ διηρημένον κεχωρισμένων τῶν ὑποστάσεων οὐκ ἔστι.*" PG 83, 252C, *Eranistes II*, 209. Trans. G.H. Ettlinger. Grillmeier 1975, 489-490.

complete manhood of Christ. This results from a one-sidedness that usually gave the impression of loosening of both the unity in Christ and the authority of the divine nature in all experiences of Christ. However, the truth was the exact opposite. Theodore defended Christ's divinity eagerly. He just avoided compromising divine properties in the incarnation. He asserted that "Logos could not move from place to place" nor "become flesh", except *κατά τὸ δοκεῖν* (apparently). In this saying, he presents a metaphorical message, not a statement pertaining to docetism, for he stresses that he does not assert that Logos did not "take real flesh" but that he did not "become flesh". Only through studying the connotations of his use of terms is it possible to understand that his view of Christ is also surprisingly comprehensive. Let us start with the term *πρόσωπον/parsôpâ* (person).<sup>112</sup>

In his Biblical exegesis, Theodore regards *πρόσωπον* as the unanimous foundation of the unity. An example of this is found in his Commentary on John. Theodore explains the unity of "I" in Christ: 'So our Lord, when he spoke of his manhood and his Godhead, referred the pronoun "I" to the common person (*parsôpâ*)' (*πρόσωπον*).<sup>113</sup> Theodore asserts that the divinity and the humanity are equal in the *πρόσωπον* of Christ. Christ is the one subject of "I", and similarly *πρόσωπον* is identical with the "I". However, for Theodore, the "person" did not exactly mean the person in the same sense as it did in the Chalcedonian creed. Theodore's concept of *πρόσωπον* derives from its original meaning of 'countenance', and he applies *πρόσωπον* in his work as the form in which *φύσις / kyana* (nature) or *ὑπόστασις/gnoma* (substance, that which settles the bottom) appears.<sup>114</sup> Still, he defines the unity of *ὑπόστασις* and *πρόσωπον* as substantial, and for him, the unity in *πρόσωπον* means more than a unity of appearance. He contends that every *φύσις* and every *ὑπόστασις* always has its own individual *πρόσωπον* and that it is the *πρόσωπον* that represents all reality of the *φύσις* with all its powers and characteristics. Since Theodore emphasizes the reality of the two *φύσεις* of Christ, he had no other alternative than to express two *πρόσωπα* in reference to these two *φύσεις*. Consequently, there may be even three instances in which Theodore uses *πρόσωπον*,

<sup>112</sup> Young, M. Frances, 1983, 208-210. Many of Theodore's works survive only in their Syrian translations. The word *parsôpâ* is the the nearest Syrian word that corresponds to the meaning of the Greek word *πρόσωπον*.

<sup>113</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Comment. in John 8.16*: ed. Vosté, 119. Grillmeier 1975, 431.

<sup>114</sup> Theodore used the Syrian word *kyana* to denote Greek *φύσις* and Syrian word *gnoma* to denote Greek *ὑπόστασις*.

since each nature has its own *πρόσωπον* and the uniting person is also called *πρόσωπον*. Theodore's application of the term is slightly confusing. Even Theodore himself admits this since he deems it necessary to make a distinction between the real condition of the two natures in Christ and the way in which their position should be expressed theoretically.<sup>115</sup>

When trying to understand the manifold use of the term *πρόσωπον* by Theodore and other Antiochians, it is necessary to perceive that they propose no hierarchies between the three *πρόσωπα*. The common *πρόσωπον* is not to be understood as the third mixed *πρόσωπον* above the two of the natures. Theodore did not mean it to be an additional one. The authentic sources of Theodore also express that there is one *πρόσωπον* in two *φύσεις*, just as in the Chalcedonian way of putting it. This one *πρόσωπον* is from the *λόγος*, which donates its own *πρόσωπον* to the assumed man.<sup>116</sup> According to Theodore, with reference to concrete individuals, such as the men Peter or Paul, as well as with reference to divinity, such as the third person of the Trinity, the *πρόσωπον* is to be regarded as identical with its *ὑπόστασις*. Both in the men and in the Logos, the *ὑπόστασεις* have the *πρόσωπα* that are proper to their natures (*φύσεις*). *Ὑπόστασις* is the singular expression of the universal *φύσις*.<sup>117</sup> In the end, Theodore presents the union in Christ in such a substantial way that it is possible to see only one subject, the *πρόσωπον*, to which all the experiences of the Savior can be referred.<sup>118</sup> Yet, a weakness in his terminology is the obscurity of the

<sup>115</sup> Young 1983, 210. Theodore says: 'For when we distinguish the natures, we say that the nature of God the Word is complete, and that (his) *prosopon* is complete (for it is not correct to speak of an *ὑπόστασις* without its *πρόσωπον*); and (we say) also that the man is complete, and likewise (his) *πρόσωπον*. But when we look to the conjunction, then we say one *πρόσωπον*.' Grillmeier 1975, 431. Leontius. frag. VI, in Swete, op. cit., II, 299, translated by Norris 1963, 228.

<sup>116</sup> Grillmeier describes Theodore's concept of the participation of the natures in Christ: "Rather, this *πρόσωπον* of Christ is to be interpreted in the light of the unique relationship into which the divine *ὑπόστασις* of the Logos enters with the human nature which it takes. This taking is not a combination of the natures of Logos and flesh to form a new nature, but an equality of honour, of greatness, of worship, which is now shared equally by Christ's human nature and the *ὑπόστασις* of the Logos. Theodore uses an analogy: the king wears purple robes to express his position. But they are not his by nature; they do not grow together with him to become one nature or substance. So, too, Christ's human nature does not grow together with the Logos into one *οὐσία*, but receives the same honour and worship as the Logos." Grillmeier 1975, 433.

<sup>117</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 432-433. Young 1983, 267. In *Eranistes*, Theodoret presents the concept of the particular opposing the common by using the word *οὐσία* instead of *φύσις*: "Eranistes: Is there any difference between *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*? Orthodoxos: In secular philosophy there is not, for *οὐσία* signifies that which is (*τὸ ὄν*), and *ὑπόστασις* that which subsists. But according to the teaching of the Fathers there is the same difference between *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις* as between the common and the particular, or the race and the special or individual." *Eranistes II*, 64. Trans. Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 64.

<sup>118</sup> Young 1983, 210.

expressions of unity in Christ. It was necessary for his successors to clarify the Antiochian terminology.

Based on this analysis, it seems obvious that for Theodore of Mopsuestia, the union in Christ took place in the *πρόσωπον*. Still, it is necessary to ask how the common *πρόσωπον* was possible if every *πρόσωπον* derives from one's *ὑπόστασις* and the *πρόσωπον* of one's *ὑπόστασις* is different from those of others. The two different *ὑποστάσεις* in Christ must also be maintained. The problem seems insoluble since Theodore excludes the possibility that there could be an additional uniting *πρόσωπον* in Christ. Thus far, Antiochian Christology seems to leave an open question in their presentation. We have to go a little deeper into Antiochian tradition to understand their inflexibility of terms. We can adduce the missing links by looking at later expressions of the Antiochian tradition that applied Theodore's terminology in its own Christology. Theodoret of Cyrus, of course, being a straight heir of Theodore, is an important figure in advancing his masters terminology. However, to attain a broader view and more profound understanding of the denotations of both Theodoret's and Theodore's terms, it necessary to consider other heirs of Theodore of Mopsuestia. This we shall do by turning to the Syrian-speaking Eastern Church.

Theodore of Mopsuestia's eventual condemnation by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 meant the disappearance of most of his works. Thus, an interpretation of his terminology that refers only to his authentic works would be based on too narrow an amount of material. However, his works had already spread widely among the *duophysites*, and particularly among the Nestorians in Syria. The revered works of Theodore were translated into Syrian before the council of Chalcedon. The Syrian translations and their interpretations are the sources from which to seek the missing parts of Theodore's whole contribution.<sup>119</sup> Based on these Syrian translations and their interpretations, it is possible to attain a better understanding on the very structure of the original Antiochian Christological terminology. There is also another reason to approach Theodore's and Theodoret's Christological terminology from the sources of the Syrian speaking Church. This is the language background and the context of Theodoret himself. On the one hand,

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<sup>119</sup> See Young 1983, 202 and Pihkala 2004, 216.

Theodoret had a good education in Greek, and he completely shared the common literary culture of the upper classes. On the other hand, he was also imbued with the native Syrian culture. He spoke the vernacular and participated in the piety of the Syrian peasants and ascetics. Theodoret's first language was Syrian. His use of formal and perfect Greek was so exaggerated that it has been evaluated as obvious proof that Greek was not his mother tongue. Theodoret lived in continuous linguistic communication of Greek and Syrian, and his understanding on the Christological terms derives from both traditions.<sup>120</sup>

Theodore of Mopsuestia was a great authority of the Theological School of Nisibis and, as a matter of fact, of the whole East Syrian Church as well.<sup>121</sup> There he was regarded with honor as “the Theologian”, “the Commentator”, “the Pillar of Orthodoxy” and “the Doctor of doctors”. This Eastern part of the Church tried to preserve Theodore's heritage completely unaltered. His original works are lost, but his heritage is found in unaltered form in the Eastern tradition. One of the scribes that transmitted Theodore of Mopsuestia's work was Mar Babai the Great (c.551-628).<sup>122</sup> Geevarghese Chediath has brilliantly given an instructive presentation on Mar Babai's understanding of the original Mopsuestian terms. When taking a closer look, one can see that Mar Babai's work is an excellent source by which we may complete our understanding of the very structure of the Antiochian Christological terminology. The study by Chediath is titled *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*. Chediath first introduces the reader to the relationship between the Greek terms φύσις, ὑπόστασις and πρόσωπον and their corresponding Syriac terms, which are *Kyana*, *Qnoma* and *Parsopa*.<sup>123</sup> The Syriac word *kyana* denotes the Greek φύσις. It is important to note that they are always universal expressions. It is not possible to

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<sup>120</sup> Young 1983, 267. Canivet 1958, 25, Pasztori-Kupán 2006, 4.

<sup>121</sup> The Church in the Persian Empire is variously known as the “Nestorian Church”, “the East Syrian Church”, “the Assyrian Church”, “the Persian Church”, “the Babylonian Church”, “the Seleucian Church” and “the Dyophysite Church in Persia”. The members of the Church themselves called it “the Church of the East” or “the Catholic Apostolic Orthodox Church”. Chediath 1982, Introduction.

<sup>122</sup> Mar Babai the Great (551-628) was born in Bet-Ainata in Bet-Zabdai where he received his primary education in the Persian books. At first he studied medicine and later theology in the Theological School of Nisibis under Abraham of Bet-Rabban. Later, he transferred to the monastic community. Mar Babai the Great was the Superior of the Great Monastery of Izla. Chediath 1982, 4-5. The main authorities of Mar Babai were Theodore of Mopsuestia, Diodore of Tarsus, John Chrysostom, the Cappadocian Fathers and Ephrem the Syrian. He defended the Antiochian diphyssite Christological conception. For Babai, Christ is both God and a man. However, he did not support any form of Theopaschism. URL: [http://fact-archive.com/encyclopedia/Babai\\_the\\_Great](http://fact-archive.com/encyclopedia/Babai_the_Great).

<sup>123</sup> Chediath 1982, 84-91.



express individual personality by the term *kyana* since it designates the common elements found in all the members of the same species. It is a question of *the universal* in relation to *the particular*. Every individual must have its own *kyana*. People have their human nature (*kyana nasaia*) and divine Persons have their divine nature (*kyana alahaia*).<sup>124</sup> The universal aspect of *kyana/ φύσις* means that it is something unchangeable.

The term *Qnoma* denotes the Greek *ὑπόστασις*. *Qnoma* has the sense of a singular substance. Mar Babai defines it in the following manner:<sup>125</sup>

*Qnoma* is called a singular substance, existing by itself, indivisible, numerically one, and distinct from many, not only because one becomes, but also because, in as much as it receives in rational free creatures diverse accidents of virtue or vice, knowledge or ignorance, and in irrational beings diverse accidents as a result of contrary temperaments or in any other way, which (accidents) as I said, are not created nor made alone.<sup>126</sup>

*Qnoma* is used here, as is the Greek *ὑπόστασις*, to denote an underlying basis with individual properties. It is something to build on, in the sense that both the individual and the universal are united in one *qnoma*. It is a particular individual representing the universal *kyana*. One singular *qnoma* may have similarities to another, but still it is always particular and different from others. Identical similarity is not possible because every *qnoma* has special properties. On a third level, all these properties in the *qnoma* are carried by the *parsopa* of individuals. For example, angels such as Gabriel and Michael, being angels according to their *kyana*, still have divergent properties in their *qnoma*. However, their properties are seen, not through their *gnoma*, but through their *parsopa*. In this sense the *parsopa* / *πρόσωπον* is to be understood as ‘countenance’.<sup>127</sup> The *qnoma* always remains a singularly indivisible substance and an individual *οὐσία* opposed to a common *οὐσία*.<sup>128</sup> Originally *qnoma*

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<sup>124</sup> Chediath 1982, 87.

<sup>125</sup> Chediath 1982, 87.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>128</sup> To understand the correspondence between the Syrian concept of *common qnoma* and the Cappadocian *κοινή φύσις*, which is now considered to have originated from Gregory of Nyssa, is necessary for any theological analysis of the Cappadocians. In Ps.-Basil, Gregory develops his doctrine of *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*. He too begins with the universal nature (*κοινή φύσις* or *κοινότης φύσεως*), which is proper for the different particulars of the species. The ‘universal substance’, however, does not describe the particular, which is characterized through its ‘particularizing

was the direct Syrian translation of the Greek *ὑπόστασις*, but the developing theological use of *ὑπόστασις* caused a divergence between the concepts. When it comes to Antiochians, they preserved the original meaning.<sup>129</sup>

Theodore, in his authentic works, uses the word *πρόσωπον* in three instances. First, in his Biblical exegesis, he interprets Jesus' sayings of "I" to be identical with Christ's *πρόσωπον*. Thus, he undeniably establishes the possibility of an ontological union between the two natures of Christ's one person. Second, he justifies the existence of the two natures by asserting that there must be two different *parsôpa* since each nature has its own *πρόσωπον*. The application of these terms seems to be confusing. However, Theodore's use of the term "Christ's *πρόσωπον*" can be understood as quite Chalcedonian in its structure. Christ himself is the indivisible "I". The "I" is the ontological *πρόσωπον*, the basis for two *πρόσωπα*, the divine and human. In addition, when two *πρόσωπα* are necessitated, it also means the necessitation of two natures. When the tradition presented by Theodore's successors in Syria is applied, it is obvious that the dualistic view of Christ is more crystalized. This line of interpretation starts with a definition of the universal nature of *kyana* / *φύσις*. Every individual has a universal, single type of *φύσις*. It is not possible to find any personality on this basis, but it necessitates the *qnoma* / *ὑπόστασις* as the basis for individual properties. Both *kyana* and *qnoma* need their common *parsopa* / *person* as their common ontological countenance. The vast Syriac tradition does not present *parsopa* as such a uniting entity as it would be presented in Theodoret's later works. Thus, Theodoret of Cyrus, who constantly contended against the consensus of the theological parties while defending the uniting connotation of *πρόσωπον*, had to leave space for the traditional dualistic use of the term *πρόσωπον* / *person* / *parsopa*. Accordingly, in his former work, he hesitated to unanimously adopt Christ's person as the real subject in Christ.

Theodoret's concept becomes clearer when focusing on the history of the term *ὑπόστασις*. The history of this Greek word leaves space for the Antiochian interpretation of the incommunicable nature of the word *ὑπόστασις*. The term

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characteristic' (*ιδιον, ιδίαζον*). *Koivon* and *ιδιον, κοινότης* and *ιδίαζον* are constantly interchanged in this work. (Ps.-Basil, Ep.38) Grillmeier 1975, 373. The particularizing characteristic, the *ιδιον*, pertains to the *ὑπόστασις*, whereas universality, the *κοινόν*, is attributed to the *φύσις*. PG 32, 328C.

<sup>129</sup> Chediath 1982, 89.

*ὑπόστασις* originates from the verb *ὑπίστημι*, which means ‘to stand’, ‘set’ or ‘place under’.<sup>130</sup> In classical Greek, in a material sense, the verb had the substantive forms of ‘foundation’, ‘sediment’, ‘ground work’ and metaphysically ‘a substantial nature’. It also was used in the sense of ‘substance’, ‘reality’ and something ‘underlying’ a specific phenomenon or essence. In the New Testament, the verb is applied to denote ‘confidence’ (2 Cor. 9:4, 11:17, Heb. 3:14), and once in the sense of ‘reality’ or ‘assurance’ (Heb. 11:1). It is applied only once to the sense that the Church more or less began to assign to it (Heb. 1:3).<sup>131</sup> This theological use of *ὑπόστασις* largely originated with this passage of the Hebrews. At first, it was used as a synonym of *οὐσία* by Epiphanius and other anti-Arian theologians. However, the semantic meaning of these two terms began to diverge in special ways. In *οὐσία*, the emphasis was on a single object, which is disclosed by using internal analysis. In *ὑπόστασις*, the emphasis was on externally concrete independence in relation to other objects.<sup>132</sup> Prestige has explained the phrase *ὑπόστασις* of *οὐσία* (Heb. 11:1) as ‘substantial objectivity’ for *ὑπόστασις* soon was used to refer to ‘genuineness’ and ‘reality’. In other words, it refers to a ‘concrete’ and ‘distinct’ existence of the abstract, and at a later stage, the particular existence of the individual.<sup>133</sup> The Cappadocian Fathers had popularized the term *ὑπόστασις* in the sense of ‘objective individual existence’, and it gradually attained the meaning ‘individual’ in Clement, Origen, Athanasius and Basil.<sup>134</sup> The history of the Greek word *ὑπόστασις* reveals that the Antiochians, including Theodoret, were constantly being called on to preserve the original meaning of the term *ὑπόστασις* as the “basis” of individual and universal properties in their Christological presentation. However, the “basis” always necessitates what it contains i.e. universal and individual entities.

Taking into account Theodoret’s Antiochian tradition, his hesitation to employ the term *ὑπόστασις* in Christological argumentation on the union seems natural. It was not a matter of refuting one-subject Christology but only of preserving the tools for

<sup>130</sup> Pásztori-Kupan 2007, 182-202. An analysis of *ὑπίστημι* is presented also in Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 57-74. Prestige argues that, “broadly speaking, it may be said that the purport of the term is derived in one group of usages from the middle voice of the verb *ὑπίστημι* and in another from the active voice. Thus, it may mean either that which underlies, or that which gives support. Prestige 1952, 163.

<sup>131</sup> “ὅς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρισμόν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς” Heb. 1:3.

<sup>132</sup> Pásztori-Kupan 2006, 58.

<sup>133</sup> Prestige, 1952, 174.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. 176-177.

expressing it. Theodoret understood *ὑπόστασις* like *qnoma*, as an underlying substance of itself, but which gathers together the universal nature and particular individual properties. He thought it was an indivisible, incommunicable, singular substance that could not be identified independently without its universal *φύσις* and its particular *πρόσωπον*.

Now, we shall deal with the terms concerning the unity in Christ. The Syrian term *parsopa* (*πρόσωπον*) was understood as the summary of the properties that, in a visible way, distinguish one *qnoma* from another *qnoma* of the same species. It is the total summary of the accidents and properties that constitute the particular characteristics of the *qnoma*. The *qnoma* of Paul cannot be the *qnoma* of Peter. Though they were equal in having a soul and a body and lived a rational and bodily life, they still possessed indivisible singularity through their *parsopa*. They were equal as *kyana* (*φύσις*), but differed with their personal properties, which their *qnoma* (*ὑπόστασις*) possessed in their *parsopa*. Also, *qnoma*, like *kyana*, was always understood as fixed and non-communicable. It cannot be the basis of unity. *Parsopa* is the summary of the properties of the *qnoma* and, in its own way, also fixed. However, it is the *parsopa* / *πρόσωπον* that was understood as communicable and the possible basis for a union. The *parsopa* of one *qnoma* with all its properties can also be assumed by another *qnoma*. It is important to note that the Antiochians, through the depth of their terminology, would be able to express *communicatio idiomatum* through *parsôpa*.<sup>135</sup>

The terminological tradition that came down from Theodore of Mopsuestia had established the unchangeable rules among the Antiochians pertaining to the use of Christological terms. First, if there are two *φύσεις* in Christ, there also exist two *ὑπόστασεις* as well. The *ὑπόστασις* of both, one of man and one of God, represent their universal *φύσις*. The *ὑπόστασις* of the man Jesus represents the *φύσις* of the manhood of all men, and the *ὑπόστασις* of Logos represents the *φύσις* of the Trinitarian God. To say that there is only one *ὑπόστασις* (hypostatic union) in Christ would mean that there is no place for another *φύσις* of manhood to live in. Second, the only communicable part of an individual is his *πρόσωπον*. All that is shared

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<sup>135</sup> Chediath 1982, 89-90.

between the φύσεις must belong to their πρόσωπα. The communication of the πρόσωπα can be so profound that the ὑπόστασις may assume the πρόσωπον of the other ὑπόστασις. After the assuming there will be only one fixed πρόσωπον i.e. in Christology there is one subject in Christ. In Christ, πρόσωπον (the person) is the total sum of all, both the human and the divine properties. The unity of the natures is substantial for πρόσωπον is also a fixed entity and represents the whole substance (qnomā/ ὑπόστασις) that underlies the πρόσωπον.

One could say that, in their Christological arguments, the Antiochians and Theodoret apply the term πρόσωπον in the sense of the Latin *persona*. Still, some have claimed that they retained the meaning of πρόσωπον as pure ‘countenance’ and that there is nothing exceptional in their understanding of the term. One proof of the first claim is based on a passage in Theodoret’s *Commentary on Ezekiel* (11:22-23). There, Theodoret describes the Saviour’s ascension from the Mount of Olives and writes:<sup>136</sup>

They stopped on the mountain opposite Jerusalem, which bears the name Mount of Olives, whence the ascension in the flesh of our Saviour also occurred. It was therefore appropriate that, having appeared at that time in human guise (*schēma*) and revealed (ἐδειξας) the two natures in one person (πρόσωπον), hinting at the divine one through the fire and suggesting the human one through the amber.<sup>137</sup>

Based on this comment, there have been interpretations that Theodoret expresses here the meaning of πρόσωπον as countenance and pure outward appearance. Christ not present in his very person. Pásztori-Kupán refutes this misunderstanding by referring to another passage the same commentary: “I, the Lord, he says, have spoken. For it is sufficient to show (δείξαι) the truth of the manifestation (δελωσίς) of the πρόσωπον.”<sup>138</sup> Pásztori-Kupán argues that the whole rationale of the passage on the ascension loses its emphasis on the truth of the manifestation of the πρόσωπον if the word δείξαι is interpreted in the sense of ‘to show’ or ‘to display’ something. On

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> “Τούτων, φησὶν, οὕτως εἰρημένων, ἀπέστη ἐκ τῆς πόλεως τὰ Χερουβὶμ, φέροντα τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν δόξαν ἐποχουμένην· ἔστι δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους κατέναντι Ἱερουσαλὴμ· ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ὄρος τὸ τῶν Ἑλαιῶν καλούμενον, ὅθεν καὶ ἡ κατὰ σάρκα τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἀνάληψις ἐγένετο· εἰκότως τοίνυν καὶ τῆνικαῦτα ἐν ἀνθρωπείῳ φανεῖς σχήματι, καὶ τὰς δύο φύσεις ἐνὶ δείξας προσώπῳ, καὶ τὴν μὲν θείαν διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς αἰνιζάμενος, διὰ τοῦ ἡλέκτρον δὲ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν παραδηλώσας, κατὰ τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὴν ψῆφον ἐξενεγκὼν εἰς τὸ ὄρος τοῦτο χωρεῖ, κάκειθεν ποιεῖται τὴν εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀνοδὸν” *On Ezekiel*, PG 81, 901. Trans. Hill, 82.

<sup>138</sup> *On Ezekiel*, PG 81, 868BC. Trans. Hill, 63.

the contrary, he claims, *δείξαι* is to be understood as ‘to manifest’ something in the sense of ‘confirming’. In addition, Theodoret makes frequent references to the Ruler Christ and to the Person of whom (*ἐκ πρόσωποῦ αὐτοῦ*) the prophets speak in the same manner as he refers to the person of the Father. Theodoret comments on Isaiah 45:14:<sup>139</sup>

The Jews saw the two *πρόσωπα* proclaimed in one: ‘For God is in you and you are God and there is no God beside you’, These words refute both the madness of Arius and Eunomius: if there is none beside him, how can he be God in himself? ... Therefore the prophetic speech refuted both the Jews who circumscribed the divinity into one *πρόσωπον* as well as Arius and Eunomius, who attempted to introduce a different nature (*φύσις*) of the Godhead.<sup>140</sup>

Thus far, this study has introduced Theodoret’s Antiochian terminology of “*πρόσωπον*”, a type of unity, and “*ὑπόστασις – φύσις*”, a type of duality in Christ. By the following two terms, Theodoret describes how the process of union took place. When describing the union in Christ, Theodoret uses the terms *συναφεία* (a conjunction) and *ἔνωσις* (a union). The *ἔνωσις* is born through *συναφεία*, which refers to unity that is born through a voluntary decision. This concept presupposes two concurrent and separated parts that are connected in *συναφεία*. *Συναφεία* does not occur according to nature, for nature always refers to necessity and not to any voluntary act. Theodoret expresses his conception in his *Refutation of Cyril’s Anathemas*.<sup>141</sup>

For the nature is a matter of necessity, not will; for example, I say we are naturally hungry, i.e. we do not experience this intentionally but of necessity; for paupers would have surely ceased begging if the power not to hunger had lain in their will. We are naturally thirsty, we naturally sleep, naturally breathe the air: and as I have said, all these belong to the category of the involuntary. Hence, someone who experiences none of these by necessity is approaching the end of life. Therefore if the union (*ἔνωσις*) of the form of God and of the form of the servant was natural (*φυσικῇ*), then the God-Word was conjoined to

<sup>139</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 66-67.

<sup>140</sup> *Τὸ μὲν γὰρ, Κύριος, τὴν δεσποτεῖαν δηλοῖ, τὴν δὲ κηδεμονίαν ἢ λύτρωσις, τὴν δὲ δημιουργίαν ἢ πλάσις; Εξέτεινα τὸν οὐρανὸν μόνος; Ἰκανα καὶ ταῦτα διελέγξαι τὴν Ἀρείου καὶ τὴν Εὐνομίου παραπληξίαν; Τίς γὰρ ὁ μόνος ταῦτα δημιουργήσας; Ὁ Πατήρ; οὐκοῦν σὺ δημιουργὸς ὁ Υἱός, Ἀλλ’ ὁ Υἱός; οὐκοῦν σὺ δημιουργὸς ὁ Πατήρ, Εἰ δὲ Πατήρ καὶ Υἱός, πῶς τὸ μόνος νοήσομεν, ἢ δηλονότι τ’ ἓ μίαν τῆς Τριάδος Θεότητα;* PG 81, 421, Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 66-67.

<sup>141</sup> *Refutatio*, ACO I, 1/6, Nr. 169:23-24, p.116, 15-117, 18. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 175-176. See Pihkala 2004, 249-250.

the form of the servant under the constraint of some necessity rather than instructed by philanthropy, and the lawgiver of all is found to be a follower of the laws of necessity.<sup>142</sup>

Theodoret's concept of *συναφεία* is expressed both in the Christological unity and in the unity of the soul and body of men. Theodoret describes the process of the *κένωσις* as following: Christ emptied himself, and Scripture speaks of this as Christ's voluntary act. He had "intent and will", and he acted accordingly. He was united to the nature assumed from us by his intent and will. This voluntary act necessitated two different parts in Theodoret's presentation. The duality of the parts remains in a kind of *συναφεία*. Each nature was perfect and they both came together (*σύνηλθον*) into the same being. They accepted each other in order to be together. Especially, the form of God took and accepted the form of the servant. Theodoret sees a similar *συναφεία* of two kinds of entities in the unity of the soul and body of man. The word *συναφεία* serves also to express the indwelling position of the divine nature.<sup>143</sup>

For if in the case of a single human being we separate the natures and call the mortal one body and the immortal one soul, yet both man, it is much more reasonable to recognize the distinctive properties of the natures of the assuming God and of the assumed man. We find even the blessed Paul dividing the one man into two when in one instance he says, 'even though our outward man is wasted away, yet this inward man is renewed (2 Cor. 4:16)', and in other, 'I rejoice in the law of God according to the inward man (Rom. 7:22)'; and again, 'that the Christ may dwell in the inner man (Eph. 3:16-17).'<sup>144</sup>

The incarnation of Christ has two important words in Theodoret's terminology. Usually he uses the word *ἐνανθρωπήσις* (inhumanation). At times, Theodoret replaces this with the term *οἰκονομία* (housekeeping, manageing), which occurs four times in *De Trinitate* and sixteen times in *De Incarnatione*. *Οἰκονομία* is mainly a technical term that refers to Christological and soteriological processes. *Οἰκονομία* leads to *σύνειμι* (to be together), which denotes the togetherness of two different

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. On one occasion, *συναφθεῖσαν* also refers to the human soul of Christ rejoined with his flesh after the resurrection. "ἀλλ' ἐπανελθοῦσαν καὶ τῷ οἰκείῳ σώματι συναφθεῖσαν· πιστεύομεν δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ Κυρίῳ λέγοντι· «Περίλυτός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου.» Τῆς γὰρ λύπης τὴν αἴσθησιν τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν λογικὸν ὑποδέχεται· εἰ δὲ ἀντὶ νοῦ ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ὑπάρχων" SC *L'Incarnation*, 98, PG 75, 1453A. Trans. Pásztori-Kupân 2006, 68.

parts. *Ἐνοικήσις* (indwelling) is the term that Theodoret uses in his Christology to denote the indwelling of the Word within the assumed temple. Its function is to clarify the meaning of the term *ἔνωσις* (union). When Theodoret uses the Greek word *ἐνοικήσις* and *σύνειμι* together with *ἔνωσις*, he completely refutes the possibility to understand union as containing the concept of adoption.<sup>145</sup>

## 2.4. From the Dualistic Exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia to the Scriptural Unity of Theodoret of Cyrus

In the source material for this study, Theodoret interprets biblical texts. It is obvious that the concept of God's impassibility is affective all through Theodoret's Biblical interpretation. This section will introduce his exegetical methods. Theodoret has been regarded as one of the last great exegetes of the Greek language. He is the heir of a long tradition of scriptural interpretation, and his exegetical works provide us excellent access to the mechanics of Antiochian methods and patristic interpretation of the Bible. Previous research has occasionally regarded this as the only aspect of importance in Theodoret's commentaries. It has been thought that he only repeated what his predecessors contributed. However, other studies have given more value to Theodoret's work by claiming that, while honouring his inherited tradition, he worked to supply the lacking information that was found in the gaps of, for example, the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia. Only more recent studies have highlighted Theodoret's important contributions.<sup>146</sup> This important research was delayed too much, not the least due to Theodoret's own humble evaluation on his own working. Even he himself would voluntarily attribute most of his own exegetical treasures to others. It is obvious that he also constantly worked in creative ways and displayed profound dogmatic solutions in his own interpretation. Though he ended up with the same conclusions as the tradition, he applied his own tools and paths.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 68.

<sup>146</sup> Godfrey Ashby and Paul Parvis have proven Theodoret's independent contribution to exegesis. Young 1983, 284.

<sup>147</sup> Guinot 2006, 891-892. Young 1983, 284. Theodoret defends and necessitates the need for many to write commentaries on Biblical texts, regardless of whether they have anything new to say. He appeals to the whole Bible to argue that the sacred duties are addressed to many. *On Prof. III*, 33.



The primary sources of this study reveal a great amount of Theodoret's independent work and, accordingly, are excellent indications of his understanding of God's impassibility. The first step towards a doctrinal standpoint occurred when he chose the form for his presentation. Theodoret wrote numerous studies on the Bible and used many different forms of presentation. Some of them are written in the form of question and answer. The questions usually contain a great amount of quotations from tradition. His other works are straightforward commentaries, which support his own thoughts more independently. The *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul* belongs to the latter group. This form of presentation makes it possible to avoid strict traditional philosophical orientations such as God's incapability to emotions. In this commentary, Theodoret also goes on to explain and use the original text as a part of his own doctrinal presentation.<sup>148</sup> He explains passage by passage, trying to find meaning in every word.<sup>149</sup>

Nevertheless, the link that connects Theodoret to former theologians that he admired is usually clear. The methods of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Theodoret have been evaluated to be very close to each other, even by Theodoret himself, so that it is important to start with a view of his exegetical work. It should be kept in mind that some researchers believe that Theodoret had adopted all his main principles from Theodore. Thus, it is natural to approach Theodoret's exegesis by first presenting the main points of Theodore's exegesis. In addition, it is crucial to see to what end Theodoret himself promotes his methods of Biblical interpretation.<sup>150</sup>

Theodore's commentaries are brief and considered to contain basic scriptural exegesis. He introduces the problems of translation and the texts as far as he was

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<sup>148</sup> Young 1983, 284-285

<sup>149</sup> Guinot 2006, 896. "To arrive at that point, he has to proceed to a meticulous grammatical examination of the text, appeal to etymology or semantics to nail down the exact meaning of the word, distinguish homonyms, give the definition of rare or technical terms and those which have dropped out of current usage. He also has to call attention to and explain a certain number of twists proper to the language of the LXX or of Paul, considered as "idioms" (*ἰδιόματα*) – that is, Hebraisms rendered into Greek by translators – or simply as a stylistic "habit" (*ἔθος*)." Guinot 2006, 899. "Another very frequent way to safeguard the letter of the text is an appeal to "custom" (*ἔθος*), to the extent that the divinely inspired Scripture is expressed in human language and refers to very concrete human behavior, some of which belongs to bygone ages or a particular society, and some is universal, belonging to all time." Guinot 2006, 901. "If an analysis of the letter (*γράμμα*) generally leads to an interpretation according to the literal sense, it requires us also, in numerous cases, to pass beyond the "obvious sense", to lift the "veil" which covers it to reach the hidden sense." Guinot 2006, 903.

<sup>150</sup> Young 1983, 284-285.

able to, not having the ability to understand Hebrew. He frequently discusses singular words and phrases. He does not completely ignore metaphorical expressions, although he aims at a strictly literal interpretation. By introductions, summaries and paraphrases, Theodore clarifies the meaning of his interpretation. He tries to avoid allegory and, instead, concentrates on historical interpretation.<sup>151</sup>

For Theodore, the original context of the text was always indispensable. He would not accept a text to be taken out of its context. When interpreting texts of the Old Testament, he consistently stressed that all passages of the Old Testament were only to be interpreted according to their original historical context. For example, the comforting individual verses of the psalms were not messianic prophecies to him if the rest of the Psalm did not fit the same interpretation. When David said, lamenting over Absalom, ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ It only concerned the life of David. That Christ took over David’s words on the Cross did not change the interpretation of the Old Testament text. Theodore took *the Song of Songs* simply as the love poem of Solomon, which had nothing to do with the Church or Christ. When it comes to Prophets, Theodore’s interpretation accordingly remained strictly historical. The prophets always spoke only to their contemporaries. However, Theodore did accept that there could be sayings concerning the times to come in the words of the prophets, but even these sayings were addressed to their hearers, and Theodore did not accept that they could contain prophecies of Christ.<sup>152</sup>

Due to his strict historical interpretation, Theodore saw a fundamental difference between the Old and New Testaments. They represented quite different times of history. What makes their messages incompatible is the new revelation in Christ. The message of God in the Bible did not become clear and understandable until the time of Christ had come. There were only shadows and prefigurations in the time of the Old Testament. In the New Testament, he saw a whole truth concerning Christian doctrine. The need to preserve the uniqueness of the New Testament was his only reason to refute the traditional Christological understanding of the Old Testament. However, he naturally accepted that the same God is in both testaments, and he also

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<sup>151</sup> In its purest form, this Antiochian principle was in dissonance with the general tradition of the Church. In the Christology of the Church, there was a long tradition in allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament in order to support the message of the New One. Young 1983, 203-204.

<sup>152</sup> Young 1983, 205.

saw some classical types in the Old Testament. He saw, for example, the correspondence between the sprinkling of the blood in Egypt in the Old Testament and Christ's death at Golgotha in the New Testament.<sup>153</sup>

In general, Theodoret tried to continue in the working methods of the great 'Interpreter', Theodore. He also aimed at strict literal interpretation of the Scriptures. He is preferred the literal meaning to the allegorical, and he used typology only if there was a certain incentive in the text to do. However, Theodoret would take new standpoints as well. He further developed Antiochian interpretation to place more emphasis on the consistency of the whole Scripture. It has been suggested that there was a fundamental shift in the whole perspective of interpretation from the interpretation of Theodore to the interpretation of Theodoret.<sup>154</sup> Theodoret gave up the radical distinction between the Old and New testaments. The shift made it possible to find biblical arguments from the Old Testament to support his Christology by typological interpretation. Examples of this will be presented later in this study<sup>155</sup>. Theodoret saw a danger in Theodore's interpretation that could lead to an interpretation of the Old Testament that is similar to that of the Jews. In the preface of his Commentary on the Psalms, he explains this position:

I have, in fact, encountered various such commentaries: some I found taking refuge in allegory with considerable relish, while others make the inspired composition resemble historical narratives of a certain type with the result that the commentary represents a case rather for Jews than the household of the faith. In my opinion, it is for a wise man to shun the extreme tendencies of both the former and the latter: the things that are relevant to stories of the past should be applied to them even today, whereas the prophecies about Christ the Lord, about the Church from the nations, the evangelical lifestyle, and the apostolic preaching should not be applied to anything else, as Jews with their proclivity to malice love to do and contrive a defense for their disbelief.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Young 1983, 206. It has been suggested that it was common among the church Fathers to think that the Biblical text was immutable and not bound to history. All exegesis that is hidden in the texts were already attributed to Moses at Sinai, and the Holy Spirit had ordered all connotations in the text. Merenlahti-Thurén 2004, 103.

<sup>154</sup> Young 1983, 285.

<sup>155</sup> See chapter 2.4.

<sup>156</sup> *Ἀλλὰ μηδεὶς περιττὸν ἡμῶν τοῦτον ἡγείσθω τὸν πόνον, τῷ καὶ ἄλλους πρὸ ἡμῶν τήνδε προθεῖναι τὴν ἑρμηνείαν. Διαφόροις γὰρ ἐντυχὼν ὑπομνήμασι, καὶ τοὺς μὲν εἰς ἀλληγορίαν μετὰ πολλῆς χωρήσαντας ἀπληστίας εὐρών, τοὺς δὲ τισιν ἱστορίαις τὴν προφητείαν ἀρμόσαντας, ὡς Ἰουδαίοις μᾶλλον τὴν ἑρμηνείαν συνηγορεῖν, ἢ τοῖς τροφίμοις τῆς πίστεως· πανούργου νενόμικα καὶ τούτων κάκείνων τὴν ἀμετρίαν φυγεῖν· ὅσα μὲν ταῖς παλαιαῖς προσῆκεν ἱστορίαις, ταύταις ταῦτα*

Theodoret, while preserving the historical content of the Biblical texts, is willing to see the Christian message foreshadowed, predicted and even defined in terms of its doctrine in the Old Testament. Thus Theodoret, in his exegesis, relates Old and New Testament texts, using them to interpret each other. Giving his interpretation on Ezekiel, Theodoret focuses on the good shepherd that gathers his scattered sheep together. The prophet refers to Israel, which would be rescued by the good shepherd. What Theodoret finds concerning in the text is the scattering of the Jews and the gentiles. To both, the Church could be the common flock of many sheep. Theodoret sees two levels of interpretation here, that of the visible and that of the sacramental. The sacramental level opens the way to understand the God who is living and taking part in the life of his people as the God in Christ that takes part in his human experiences. The flock of providence will visibly be Israel and sacramentally all people. On the individual level, this means a return from the Devil to God, freedom from tyrannical servitude. The pasture will be nourishing, and on a legal level, people will be taught the divine Gospel. Food and drink will not end. Theodoret also takes the word *mountain* as an explanatory type, reflecting an enduring message that lasts through the ages from one context to another. He sees that prophets has promised divine revelations just on the high mountain of Israel. Theodoret names here many mountains mentioned by David to have the same connotation. God will live forever in these mountains, for he is pleased to do this. Isaiah and Micah mean the same when seeing in the future, “In the last days the mountain of the Lord will become manifest, and the house of the Lord on the crests of the mountains, and all nations will come to it.” In addition, Theodoret equates these mountains with what the Lord said would be the location of the town that cannot be hidden. It will be the mountain of Gospel teaching. All inspired books are mountains too. However, people will need the “Good Shephard” to get them to these mountains.<sup>157</sup>

In this exegesis, Theodoret employs a wider field of expression to describe Divine impassibility, too. Unlike Theodor, he perceives a fundamental unity in the whole of

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*προσαρμόσαι καὶ νῦν· τὰς δὲ περὶ τοῦ Λεσπό του Χριστοῦ προρρήσεις, καὶ τῆς ἐξ ἔθνων Ἐκκλησίας, καὶ τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς πολιτείας, καὶ τῶν ἀποσίας, καὶ τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς πολιτείας, καὶ τῶν ἀποστολικῶν κηρυγμάτων, μὴ ἑτέροις ἀναθεῖναι τισιν, ὅπερ Ἰουδαίοις φίλον ποιεῖν κακουργία συζῶσι, καὶ τῆς σφῶν ἀπιστίας ἀπολογία ἀφαινοῦσιν. On Psalms PG 80, 860. Commentary on the Psalms 73-150. Transl. by Robert C. Hill, p.41.*

<sup>157</sup> *On Prof. II, 227-228. Trans. Hill.*

Scripture. The Old Testament even contain references to support the doctrines of the Trinity as well as the doctrine of two nature Christology. Theodoret also accepts a great deal of spiritual meaning (*θεωρία*) in his interpretations. Accordingly, he can see more than one purpose (*σκοπός*) in the text. Theodoret finds both historical reference and other meanings in the texts.<sup>158</sup> In many cases, the typological explanation allows him to search for “a deeper, spiritual meaning” of the text while still preserving its literal interpretation. The internal logic of biblical narrative also demands the use of typology. “*The scopos*” of the text is to find also the mystery of the Church in Christology and various time settings.<sup>159</sup> Theodoret, of course, wants to apply his exegesis to support his doctrine of two-nature Christology. However, his argumentation is sometimes hard to follow because of his unwillingness to use concrete vocabulary. This was due to his arguments with Cyril that led him to use abstract formulas in his interpretations.<sup>160</sup> Theodoret also seems to apply his work on “hot topics” to more remote texts, for example, to Old Testament texts. And vice versa, the remote texts are able to supply suitable material for ongoing Christological formulation.

## 2.5. God’s Authority Qualifies the *Communication of Names*

Theodoret presents the very heart of his concept of “*Divine theoria*” in the Bible in his *Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*. The consistency of the whole Bible derives from the concept of divine infallibility of the Scriptures. Everything that originates from God bears an aspect of his names, such as “Eternal, Impassible and Immutable”. This exegetical axiom will be very effective in making unions between different entities, such as natures or persons. This is useful in Theodoret’s interpretation when defending God’s impassibility. Different entities may be united with each other, but their properties do not vanish. The Divine authority is able to make unions without any changes in the *ὑπόστασεις* or *φύσεις* of the two uniting entities. Theodoret defines God as impassible while still having human experiences since the Biblical text provides Divine authorisation for this interpretation. Theodoret wants to define The Scriptures as the special mediator of the wisdom of God. Like

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<sup>158</sup> Young 1983, 286.

<sup>159</sup> Guinot 2006, 907.

<sup>160</sup> Guinot 2006, 888.

other patristic exegetes, he claims that the Bible is divinely inspired (*Θεόπνευστος*) through and through. The Bible is beneficial (*ὄφελιμος*) for all doctrinal work and has the power (*δυναμίς*) to define everything. Scripture has received its authority directly from God. This authorizing comes from God, for he has named (*ὀνομάζω*) this truth in the Bible.<sup>161</sup> By means of divine naming and inspiration, the Scriptures have been set apart from all other works of human wisdom. The Scriptures are spiritual, and the grace that works in them is originates from the third Person of the Trinity.<sup>162</sup>

The wisdom of the Scriptures is, in many respects, like the first wisdom in God, unbound by any historical context. In his commentary on Paul's First Letter to Timothy, Theodoret asserts, concerning the apostle Paul, that the apostle could work without any time limits. Accordingly, he had a capability to see and deal with future theological debates. The apostle had God's capability to foresee, by spiritual grace (*καὶ διὰ τῆς πνευματικῆς χάριτος τὰς αἵρετικὰς προθεωρήσας*), future heretical thorns. When ascribing this wisdom to Paul, Theodoret opens the path to present his own doctrines through his commentaries on the Pauline Letters. He says that only these words are suitable to resist heresies.<sup>163</sup> In the Commentary on the First Letter to Corinthians, Theodoret asserts that, through the "*Divine theoria*", Paul was the sole person to whom was given the capability to name the first and the second Trinitarian persons, purposefully by proper names. He chose the names, the Father and the Son, to resist the future heresies of polytheism.<sup>164</sup> He defended the future Trinitarian conception of Nicaea and Constantinople. In many passages, Theodoret assesses that Paul purposefully refutes the faulty conceptions of the supporters of Arius and Eunomius.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Theodoret applies here his special method of "naming". There is further discussion on this subject in the next chapter.

<sup>162</sup> "Τῷ διορισμῷ χρησάμενος ἀπέκρινε τὰ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας συγγράμματα. Θεόπνευστον δὲ Γραφὴν τὴν πνευματικὴν ὠνόμασεν. Ἡ γὰρ τοῦ θεοῦ Πνεύματος χάρις διὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐφθέγγατο. Θεὸς τοίνυν τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, εἶπερ ἀληθῶς, κατὰ τὸν Ἀπόστολον, θεόπνευστος τοῦ Πνεύματος ἡ Γραφή." *Ad II Tim.*, PG 82, 849. Trans. Hill, 245-246.

<sup>163</sup> *Ad I Tim.*, PG 82, 812. Trans. Hill, 220-221.

<sup>164</sup> "Ἐτερον ὁ θεῖος Ἀπόστολος κατασκευᾶσαι βούλεται. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ εἶπεν, ὅτι οὐδεὶς Θεὸς ἕτερος εἰ μὴ εἷς, ἐκήρυττε δὲ καὶ τὸν Χριστὸν Θεὸν, καὶ τὸ πανάγιον δὲ ὡσαύτως Πνεῦμα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συνηριθμεῖ, τοῖς δὲ τὴν ἀκριβῆ θεολογίαν οὐδέπω μεμαθηκόσιν ἀμφεβάλλετο πῶς εἷς Θεός, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ μέντοι καὶ τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος συνηριθμημένου." *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 288-289. Trans. Hill, 191-192.

<sup>165</sup> "Εἰ δὲ οἱ ἐξ Ἀρείου καὶ Εὐνομίου λέγοιεν τὸ εἷς Θεός, ἐκβάλλειν τὸν Υἱὸν τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς θεότητος, ἀκουέτωσαν τῶν ἐξ ἡς, ὅτι καὶ εἷς Κύριος. Εἰ γὰρ, ἐπειδὴ εἷς Θεὸς ὁ Πατὴρ, οὐ Θεὸς ὁ

Theodoret keeps on stressing the literal way of interpretation and especially concentrates on names. In this study, I shall call this tendency *the communication of the names*. It is worth noting that Theodoret applies his concept of unlimited Scriptural authority to emphasize the Biblical names and expressions linked to them. The names themselves, if mentioned in the Scriptures, have their literal meaning by divine authority. It is by naming that the Scriptures form unions. If two or more names or various expressions are united in one Biblical context, they are permanently associated with each other in other contexts as well. In other contexts, one singular name by itself is authoritative enough to represent the previously formed union. Theodoret asserts that all the unions formed in the Biblical sayings are substantial.<sup>166</sup>

It is necessary to define that there is even ontological expression in Theodoret's uses of the concept of the *communication of the names*. According to Theodoret, names always have ontological value for their bearers and, thus, become theological statements whenever they are applied. The act of *naming* always creates an ontological reality when used by the Scriptures.<sup>167</sup> Thus, it is also possible to connect the concept of *communicatio idiomatum* with Biblical *communicatio onomaton*.<sup>168</sup> In *La Trinité*, Theodoret writes:

Ch. 4. Ἡμεῖς οἱ τῆς Τριάδος ἐρασταὶ καὶ προσκυνηταὶ καὶ κήρυκες  
μεγαλόφωνοί τε καὶ μεγαλόφρονες, πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα Θεὸν Πατέρα  
ἄναρχον καὶ ἀγέννητον, αἰὶ ὄντα Πατέρα, οὐχ ὕστερον τοῦτο κτησά-  
μενον, οὐ γὰρ ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, ἀλλ' ἄνωθεν ἦν Πατὴρ οὐδὲ γέγονε πρῶτον  
Υἱὸς εἴτα Πατὴρ, κατὰ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἀκολουθίαν· ἀλλ' ἀφ' οὗπερ  
ἔστιν, αἰὶ δὲ ἔστι, Πατὴρ καὶ ἔστι καὶ καλεῖται. SC, *Trinité*, 240

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Υἱὸς, οὐδὲ Πατὴρ ἄρα Κύριος, ἐπειδὴ εἰς Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός. Ἀλλ' εἰς τὴν ἐκείνων κεφαλὴν  
τραπέει τὸ βλάσφημον. “, *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 289. Trans. Hill, 192.

<sup>166</sup> See also Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 40-41.

<sup>167</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 143.

<sup>168</sup> Biblical naming was a useful and important tool to Theodoret when expressing and developing his expressions of Christology in the time of great tensions between the different schools. Clayton has come to the conclusion that there are always independently “two subjects” in Theodoret's Christology and that the union in Christ is not more than a “prosopic kind of union”. He claims that Theodoret does not present any kind of ontological union in Christ to provide grounds for *communicatio idiomatum*. Clayton also does not see any real evolution in Theodoret's Christology. However, he admits a thorough change in his terminology, precisely at the time when the primary source for this study, *The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, was written. Clayton did not take note that Theodoret formed his concept of Christology through biblical exegesis, which allowed him to define ontological union and *communicatio idiomatum* by biblical naming. See Clayton 2007, 206, 283-288

...(concerning God the Father): 'Neither had he (i.e. the Father) been a Son first, and then (became) a Father, according to the corporeal sequence, but since ever he is – yet he is eternally – Father he both is and is *called* *Trinitate*, (PG 75, 1152A).

Ch.11: ...ἀλλὰ Πατὴρ καὶ Υἱός· διὸ καὶ ταῦτα τέθεικε τὰ ὀνόματα, ἵν' ἐκ τῶν ὀνομάτων μάθωμεν τὴν ταυτότητα. SC, *Trinité*, 268.

'That is why (Scripture) uses these names (of Father and Son) so that from them we would *learn the sameness* (of their possessors' nature)' (*Trinitate*, PG75, 1161C).

Ch. 24: Τούτου χάριν, εἰ ἐνοίκησις καὶ ναὸς Θεοῦ οἱ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος χάριτος ἀπολαύοντες εἰσὶ καὶ καλοῦνται, τῆς θείας φύσεως δῆλον ὅτι τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, καὶ Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ ὁμοούσιον. SC, *Trinité*, 318.

'If those who received the grace of the Spirit in a greater or smaller measure are indeed *called* temples of God, from this appellation we shall conclude that (the Holy Spirit) is akin (to the Father and the Son)' (*Trinitate*, PG 75, 1181 D)<sup>169</sup>

It has been suggested that Theodoret's rationale can be seen in these quotations. The act of naming reveals ontological realities and relationships. Based on singular names in their individual contexts, Theodoret makes interpretations, similar to his concept of *divine theoria*. One name of Christ, *Immanuel* (i.e. God with us), is alone able to express the ontological unity of Christ's two natures – for there is God and one of us in Christ. The *commucation of names* appears throughout the writings of Theodoret. There are several verbs, in accordance with naming (*ὀνομάζω*),<sup>170</sup> which he applies in these expressions. These words are *ἀποκαλέω* (to call, invoke), *διδάσκω* (to teach), *καλέω* (to call), *λέγω* (to say, assert), *προσαγορεύω* (to label), and *χρηματίζω* (to title). Theodoret uses Biblical interpretation as a more acceptable tool than direct doctrinal discussion with argueable terms when defining concepts such as divine unity and the properties of the persons of God.

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<sup>169</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 41.

<sup>170</sup> In his Letter number 147 to John the Oeconomus, Theodoret greatly stresses the significance of naming: "Our Lord Jesus Christ is not a different person (*πρόσωπον*) from the Son who completes the Trinity. For the same one before the ages was Only-begotten Son and God-Word, and after the resurrection, he was *called* Jesus and Christ, *receiving the names from the facts*. Jesus means Saviour: 'You shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins' (Matt. 1:21). He is also *named* Christ as being anointed with the All-holy Spirit according to the humanity, and *called* our high priest, apostle, prophet and king ... Let nobody then senselessly suppose that the Christ is any other than the Only-begotten Son." Pásztori-Kupán\_2006, 44.



### 3. THEODORET'S DOCTRINE OF TRINITARIAN UNITY

#### 3.1. God the Eternal Father

As was presented in the chapter concerning the terms, Theodoret adopted and developed the Trinitarian formulation of the Cappadocian Fathers according to the tradition of the Antiochian school. The structure was as follows: there is one οὐσία (also called φύσις) and three ὑποστάσεις (also called πρόσωπα) in the Trinity. This is clearly expressed in Theodoret's tract *On the Holy and Vivifying Trinity* (*De Trinitate*). In this pre-Ephesian presentation, he continually emphasized God's revelation, which is delivered by the Scriptures. He does not try to confirm the Trinitarian structure with speculation on philosophical concepts, but he rather relies here on a literal interpretation of the Bible. He says that there is nothing human but only divine science (θεογνωσία)<sup>171</sup> in the Trinitarian doctrine. It is not only the matter of knowledge but also that of faith, for the right believers confess the nature (φύσις) and the substance (οὐσία) of the Trinity to be only one. However, the One is perceived in three characteristics (ιδιότησιν) as three persons (πρόσωπα).<sup>172</sup>

In the fourth chapter of *De Trinitate*, Theodoret interprets how Biblical naming supports the view of Trinitarian oneness in three πρόσωπα. The interpretation is evident in his arguments on the principle of God's immutability. He asserts that the target of faith is only one God the Father, who eternally bears the properties "unbegun and unbegotten". He is eternally what the Bible says him to be, the existent Father. It was not possible for him to become the Father after any moment, for there had not been a time when he was not the Father. According to the Bible, He had been the Father from the very beginning. He was neither the Son first nor did he become the Father afterwards, as would happen in corporeal sequence. Whatever he is called in the Bible, that he now and will be eternally. He is both Father and is

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<sup>171</sup> "As a concept, *θεολογία* is most often read and understood in Gregory as synonymous and interchangeable with the concept of divine knowledge *θεογνωσία*. As an activity, it is most commonly regarded, as a human approach to God, as contemplation, *θεωρίᾳ*, or, to use the words of Werner Jaeger, as something that 'Hellenic striving for a philosophic understanding of what we believe' has 'called into being'. Ojell 2007, 473. For more on *θεογνωσία*, see Ojell 2007, 473-484.

<sup>172</sup> SC, *Trinité*, 240-244. *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1152, 1187. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 113.

called Father.<sup>173</sup> This God the Father has the divine nature.<sup>174</sup> Following Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret also sees divine nature (*φύσις*) as an unchangeable platonic *idea*, which takes its form in one particular individual in the Trinity.

What he comes to his commentary on the Letter to Ephesians, Theodoret proceeds with the same conception, clarifying it even more. Not even the Father-Son relationship can break the eternity of the nature (*φύσις*). The Father has always been, and will always be, the Father. There was no beginning, for there are no ages. The Father has not been a son first. He is by his nature the Father (*φύσει Πατήρ*). Yet, the idea that there is no beginning of fatherhood does not mean that it would be something nominal. Theodoret asserts that the God is properly the Father and truly God the Father (*Κυρίως Πατήρ, καὶ ἀληθῶς Πατήρ ὁ Θεός*). On the one hand, the notion that he is *God the Father* establishes him as the Father with eternality and immutability. On the other hand, the idea that He was the Father first suggests that He did share the property with human beings. This application emerges when he says that all other fathers, both spiritual (*πνευματικοὶ*) and bodily (*σωματικοὶ*), draw (*εἴλκυσαν*) their name from above.<sup>175</sup>

### 3.2. The Son, the Co-eternal God, Presented by the *Communication of Names*

In *De Trinitate*, Theodoret had employed Biblical exegesis to define the position of the Son in the Trinity. The concept that he defends is that the Son also has the same immutable divine nature as the Father. Consequently, the existence of the Son is co-eternal (*συναιδίδιος*) with his Begetter. The Son's existence does not have a beginning but is eternal. Therefore, the Father and the Son exist inseparably without any limitations of time. This is confirmed by their Biblical *names* and *calling*. If the eternity of the Son was denied, then, the eternity of the Father would be denied also. This is because they both similarly bear their unchangeable Scriptural names of the

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<sup>173</sup>“ἀλλ’ ἄνωθεν ἦν Πατήρ οὐδὲ γέγονε πρῶτον Υἱὸς εἴτα Πατήρ, κατὰ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἀκολουθίαν· ἀλλ’ ἅφ’ οὗπερ ἔστιν, αἰὲν ἔστι, Πατήρ καὶ ἔστι καὶ καλεῖται.” SC, *Trinité*, 240-244, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1152. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 28-29, 114-115.

<sup>174</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 680, Trans. Hill, 138-140.

<sup>175</sup> “ἀλλ’ αἰὲν Πατήρ ἔστι, καὶ φύσει Πατήρ· οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι πατέρες, εἴτε σωματικοί, εἴτε πνευματικοί, ἄνωθεν τὴν προσεῖτε σωματικοί, εἴτε πνευματικοί, ἄνωθεν τὴν προσηγορίαν εἴλκυσαν. Λέγει δὲ ἐπὶ γῆς πατέρας, τοὺς φύσει πατέρας· οὐρανίους δὲ πατέρας, τοὺς πνευματικοὺς καλεῖ. “*Ad. Eph.*, PG 82, 529. Trans. Hill, 44.

*Father and the Son.* Another Scriptural argument of his is that in the beginning the *Word was with God*. Theodoret points to the literal meaning of this saying. It was not said that the Word *became* but that it *was* (ἴσθι). Accordingly, we are not to describe the Son and the Father with any temporal terms. Everything is subsequent to the *One* existing in the beginning, both time (χρόνος) and aeon (αἰὼν) and anything temporal. If the Son had not been eternally together with God the Father, but had come into existence later, then it would be necessary to place a certain time or aeon between the Father and the Son. This would be impossible since the ages are also created by the Son.<sup>176</sup>

Theodoret approved of his strong appeal to the method of communication of names when it came time to write the Commentary on Pauline letters. When commenting on the fifteenth chapter of the First Letter to the Corinthians and on the first chapter of the Letter to the Hebrews, he does not see any error in using the names of God and the Son as interchangeable subjects, and he applies this understanding to every Biblical saying that derives from both the New and the Old Testament. Theodoret indicates this Scriptural unity as well as the interchangeableness of divine names when he cites *Dan. 7.14.* : “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which for all time will not be destroyed”. According to Theodoret, this promise is given with regard to Christ’s eternal kingdom.<sup>177</sup> Consequently, the Son also has to be the Creator of the ages (τῶν αἰώνων δὲ ποιητὴν εἴρηκε τὸν Υἱὸν).<sup>178</sup> The Son could not be located beyond any temporal interval (ὑπερκείμενος χρονικοῦ διαστή). The beginning of the status of the Only-begotten Son does not exist. However, on the contrary, the beginning of the man Jesus Christ, the *First Born*, does exist. As we will see in the chapter concerning the human nature of Christ, Christ bears time-limitations that pertain to his humanity.<sup>179</sup> The interchangeableness of the divine names emphatically

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<sup>176</sup> “Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα Υἱὸν συναϊδίον τῷ γεννήσαντι, οὐκ ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι λαβόντα, ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ ὄντα, καὶ σὺν Πατρὶ ὄντα· ἀφ’ οὗ γὰρ Πατὴρ, αἰεὶ δὲ Πατὴρ, ἐξ ἐκείνου Υἱός· ἀχωρίστως γὰρ ἔχει ταῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλα, τὰ τε ὀνόματα, καὶ τὰ πράγματα· εἰ οὐκ αἰεὶ δὲ ὁ Υἱός, ἀλλ’ ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, οὐδὲ αἰεὶ ὁ Πατὴρ· ἀφ’ οὗ γὰρ ἐγέννησε, τοῦτο ἔχει τὸ ὄνομα· εἰ δὲ αἰεὶ ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Πατὴρ (βλάσφημον γὰρ τῷ ὄντι, ὑπὸ χρόνους ποιῆσαι τὸν τῶν χρόνων ποιητὴν, καὶ χρονικοῦ διαστήματος ἀποφῆναι δευτέραν τὴν ἄχρονον καὶ ὑπὲρ χρόνον γέννησιν), αἰεὶ ὁ Υἱός, ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς μὲν ἀρρήτως γεννηθεὶς, μετὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς δὲ αἰεὶ ὢν, καὶ σὺν τῷ Πατρὶ γνωριζόμενος.” SC, *Trinité*, 240-, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1152, 1153. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 114-115.

<sup>177</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 356. Trans. Hill, 227-228.

<sup>178</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 680, 681. Trans. Hill, 138-141.

<sup>179</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 680-681. Trans. Hill, 139.

excludes the possibility that the impassibility of God would be different from that of the Son's.

Theodoret also explicitly indicates that he uses Biblical statements as rational arguments in theological doctrine, and he admits that it does not seem rational to take the Biblical statements of the names and persons literally. Especially regarding people who are not inside the tradition of the Church, this obviously causes confusion. Those who are not initiated in the divine things do not admit, for example, that the Son is not posterior to the One begetting him.<sup>180</sup> Theodoret, using metaphor, indicates how indispensable it is to confess the co-eternity of the Father and the Son. He describes the process of burning and focuses on two different phenomena, a fire and the effulgence of the fire. The process, from its very beginning, requires that both of them are real. The subjects must exist and work concurrently, for, on the one hand, the heart and reason of the flaming effulgence is all the time the fire and, on the other hand, the fire cannot exist without its effulgence.

The effulgence (τὸ ἀπαύγασμα) both comes from the fire (ἐκ τοῦ πυρός) and remains with the fire, it has a fire as its cause, and it is inseparable from the fire, the fire comes from the one, the effulgence from the other. So if in material things it is possible for something to come from something, and to coexist with what it comes from, have no doubt he (Paul) is saying that God the Word (ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος), Only-begotten (ὁ μονογενὴς) Son of God is both begotten as Son and also coexists as Word, which is “effulgence of glory” with the one begetting him. The glory (ἡ δόξα) comes from one, the effulgence from the other. The glory remains forever, and therefore too the effulgence remains forever. The effulgence is the same nature (δὲ ὁμοφύες) as the fire; so too the Son is as the Father.<sup>181</sup>

Theodoret also uses the word “one” (εἷς) to indicate the unity of the Son and the Father. The similar naming refers to their similar position. Paul writes in I Cor. 8:6:

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<sup>180</sup> Pásztori-Kupán pays special attention to Theodoret's evaluation on philosophical and theological arguments in *Curatio*. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 31.

<sup>181</sup> “Τὸ γὰρ ἀπαύγασμα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πυρός ἐστι, καὶ σὺν τῷ πυρὶ ἐστι· καὶ αἷτιον μὲν ἔχει τὸ πῦρ, ἀχώριστον δὲ ἐστι τοῦ πυρός. Ἐξ οὗ γὰρ τὸ πῦρ, ἐξ ἐκείνου καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα. Εἰ τοίνυν ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν δυνατόν εἶναι τι ἐκ τινος, καὶ συνυπάρχειν τούτῳ ἐξ οὐπὲρ ἐστι· Μὴ ἀμφιβάλλης, φησὶν, ὡς ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος, ὁ μονογενὴς τοῦ Θεοῦ Υἱός, καὶ γεγέννηται ὡς Υἱός, καὶ συνυπάρχει τῷ γεγεννηκότι ὡς Λόγος, ὃς ἀπὸ καὶ συνυπάρχει τῷ γεγεννηκότι ὡς Λόγος, ὃς ἀπαύγασμα δόξης. Ἐξ οὗ γὰρ ἡ δόξα, ἐξ ἐκείνου καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα. Αἰεὶ δὲ ἡ δόξα, αἰεὶ τοίνυν καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα. Καὶ τῷ πυρὶ δὲ ὁμοφύες τὸ ἀπαύγασμα οὐκοῦν καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς τῷ Πατρὶ” *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 680-681. Trans. Hill, 138-141.

“For us, however, there is one God the Father, from whom comes all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord Christ, through whom all things come and through whom we exist.”<sup>182</sup> Theodoret applies the word *one* to the names of God and Christ as a common attribute. The *one* implicates the unity between them. At the same time, Theodoret preserves the difference of the two *πρόσωπα*. The *one* does not indicate the names to be synonyms to each other so that there would be only one person in two places. On the contrary, that Theodoret mentions the word *one* twice indicates the existence of the two different entities. Yet, they have substantial unity with each other solely based on the word *one*. According to this interpretation, Theodoret sees Paul as refuting the Arian conception that there would be only one Person in the Trinity. Theodoret suggests that the Arians would, of course, take note only of the first expression of *one God* and deny the other of *one Lord Christ*. The right interpretation is that the parallel expressions of one God (εἷς Θεός) and one Lord Jesus Christ (εἷς Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός) are equal in their validity. In the two sayings, the word *one* (εἷς) is as a bridge between the two names and titles. It reveals that all divine qualities are addressed to these two different titles. God and Christ have equal force and equal being. This equality is possible to see in both directions. Christ the Lord is God through the uniting word *one*, and equally, God is Lord on the same basis. Theodoret makes the same argument from negation. If the Lord Jesus Christ was not God, then the God himself would not be the Lord either.<sup>183</sup>

Theodoret also uses the title Lord as the uniting bridge word. He refers to Exodus:

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.”;  
 “Listen, Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord” and “O Lord my God,  
 you are exceedingly magnified.”<sup>184</sup>

Through the name Lord, both God and Christ are named as equals. They have the same substantial being, since God is altogether Lord and Lord is altogether God.<sup>185</sup>

The power of the Trinity is also one and indivisible. Theodoret interprets Paul’s greeting in 2 Thess 1:1-2 as a dogmatic statement. He sees in the text both equal

<sup>182</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 289. Trans. Hill, 192-193

<sup>183</sup> “Ὁ γὰρ θεὸς Ἀπόστολος τὴν ἰσότητα δείκνυσι, καὶ εἷς ὁμοίως ἐπὶ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ τεθεικὼς, καὶ τὴν Κύριος φωνὴν ἰσοδυναμοῦσαν τῇ Θεός ἐπιδείξας. Οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ Παλαιὰ Γραφή τὰς προσηγορίας ταύτας δείκνυσι συνημμένας.”, *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 289. Trans. Hill, 192-193

<sup>184</sup> *Exod* 20.2; *Deut* 6.4 and *Ps* 104.1.

<sup>185</sup> “ὁ τοίνυν ὄντως Θεός, παντὶς καὶ Κύριος, καὶ ὁ ὄντως Κύριος, παντὶς καὶ”. *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 289. Trans. Hill, 192-193.

adoration<sup>186</sup> and equal power in the Trinity. Paul writes, “Paul, Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Theodoret interprets the text by concentrating on the two divine names, God our Father (*Θεὸς Πατὴρ ἡμῶν*) and Lord Jesus Christ (*Κυρίος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*). He focuses on the preposition “in”, which pertains to both of them. The senders of the greeting have written *in God our Father* and *in Lord Jesus Christ*, by which they mention both equally in the same Biblical statement. In the same way, the blessing of grace and peace *from God our Father* and *from Lord Jesus Christ* is hoped for. Both are authoritative subjects to fulfil the promises of the greeting. According to Theodoret, the divine names are located in this promise for a special purpose, i.e. to confirm the equality of the power (*τὸ ἰσοδύναμον*) of the Father and the Son. They are equally powerful subjects that provide us the same good things.<sup>187</sup>

The eminence of divinity also belongs equally to God and Christ. Yet, in relation to this, Theodoret notes that Christ bears a different position in his human nature. The divine eminence of the Trinity (*θεότητος τοῦ ὕψους*) with full power belongs to the Only-begotten (*ὁ μονογενοῦς*). He asserts that the prophets talk about the divinity of the Only-begotten, while they also talk of God:<sup>188</sup>

The prophets proclaim them both:

1. I am God eternal, I am God first, I am God later, and into the future I am God.
2. Before me there was no other God, nor will be after me, and apart from me there is none.
3. Besides me there is no one righteous and saving.
4. By myself I have sworn, says the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God.<sup>189</sup>

<sup>186</sup> The glory (*ἡ δόξα*) of God, just in the same form, belongs to the divinity of Christ. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ is also the father of glory. *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 105. Trans. Hill, 75-76.

<sup>187</sup> “Καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς εἰώθαμεν γράφειν Ὁ δεῖνα τῷ δεῖνι ἐν Κυρίῳ χαίρειν. Καὶ ἐνταῦθα δὲ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ ἰσοδύναμον ἡμᾶς ἐδί”, *Ad II Thes.*, PG 82, 657. Trans. Hill, 125.

<sup>188</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 201. Trans. 127.

<sup>189</sup> “Ἐγὼ Θεὸς προαιώνιος, καὶ ἐγὼ Θεὸς πρῶτος, καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα, καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐπερχόμενα ἐγὼ εἰμι· καί· «Ἐμπροσθέν μου οὐκ ἐγένετο ἄλλος Θεός, καὶ μετ’ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔσται, καὶ πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστι·» καὶ «Δίκαιος καὶ σωτὴρ οὐκ ἔστι παρὲς ἐμοῦ·» τότε ἐπήγαγε· «Κατ’ ἐμαυτοῦ ὥμοσα,

The Divinity is eternal, and it is present everywhere. By the unifying naming of the Bible, Theodoret indicates that both the Son and the Father completely share the divine nature with all its properties. However, he emphasises a different kind of presence through the Second Person of the Trinity since the Second Person comes near to everyone.<sup>190</sup> Theodoret appeals to Biblical naming to confirm the immutability of Divine nature. However, he also uses it to argue that Divine nature can take part in human life, as will be presented below in the next chapters.

### 3.3. The Holy Spirit as Co-eternal God Presented by the *Communication of Names*

A presentation of Theodoret's understanding of the Trinitarian unity through Biblical argumentation is complete without noting his use of communication of names in relation to the Holy Spirit as well. In order to defend the full Trinitarian unity, he deals with many Biblical titles that he attributes to the third Person of the Trinity. In *De Trinitate (On the Holy and Vivifying Trinity)*, Theodoret defines the Holy Spirit: Just as the Son, the Holy Spirit is of God and of the divine nature. Therefore, He is of equal rank with the Father and the Son. He is also eternal and has the same dominion as they do. He is the Creator as well. In the nineteenth chapter of *De Trinitate*, Theodoret writes:

We also believe in the righteous, the guiding, the good and the counselling Holy Spirit, who proceeds from God. He was not begotten, because there is one Only-begotten. Nor was he created since nowhere in Holy Scripture do we find him being enumerated along with the creatures, but ranked together with the Father and the Son. We have heard that he comes from the Father, yet we do not inquire about the mode of his procession, but rather acquiesce in the limits the theologians and blessed men have fixed for us.<sup>191</sup>

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λέγει Κύριος, ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ, καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται τῷ Θεῷ. » Ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὰ συνεχῆ τῆς ἐρμηνείας βαδίζωμεν.“, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 201. Trans. Hill, 127.

<sup>190</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 708. Trans. Hill, 154.

<sup>191</sup> “Πιστεύομεν δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, τὸ εὐθὲς, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ παρά ἅγιον, τὸ εὐθὲς, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ παράκλητον, τὸ ἐκ Θεοῦ προελθόν, οὐ γεννηθέν· εἷς γὰρ Μονογενής· οὔτε μὴν κτισθέν· οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ εὐρίσκομεν ἐν τῇ θείᾳ Γραφῇ τῇ κτίσει συναριθμούμενον, ἀλλὰ Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συνταπτόμενον· ἐκπορευόμενον δὲ αὐτὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἡκούσαμεν, καὶ οὐ πολυπραγμονοῦμεν πῶς ἐκπορεύεται, ἀλλὰ στέργομεν τοῖς τεθεῖσιν ἡμῖν ὅροις ὑπὸ τῶν θεολόγων καὶ μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν.” SC, *Trinité*, 240, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1176. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 130.

Theodoret applies the communication of names to confirm this outlining of the Trinitarian unity concerning the Holy Spirit. He starts with the authority of the tradition in the Church. According to Theodoret, the right tradition is the counterforce against the common enemy of human beings. The enemy wages war both through other human beings and through man's own thoughts. He says that the enemy is the destroying angel and that he teaches his followers and trains them for vices. The right tradition teaches to hold firm to the instructions that one has receives from the apostolic witness. The right tradition is authoritative since the sources of the tradition are reliable. In this authoritative tradition, there is a factual presence of the Scriptures, which re the sacred writings (τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα). They are sacred since they are all divinely inspired (θεόπνευστος). The grace that works through them is of the third Person of the Trinity, Holy Spirit (τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). The conclusion that "the Holy Spirit is God" (θεὸς τοίνυν το Πνεῦμα το ἅγιον)<sup>192</sup> comes after these arguments. The Scriptures belong both to the Holy Spirit and to God. In addition, the work of the Holy Spirit benefits the virtues of the special teaching of the Scriptures, the censure of lawless life, the correction of life and training in righteousness. In the right tradition, people are related to the virtues, which produces perfection and relates us to the God of all. The name "θεόπνευστος" is, according to Theodoret's communication of names, authoritative enough to define the ontological unity in order to complete the Trinity.<sup>193</sup>

Theodoret uses the communication of names to describe the relation between the second and third Persons of the Trinity as well and concludes that the name of the second Person may also represent the third one. When working on the Second Letter to the Thessalonians, Theodoret submits the third chapter to a Trinitarian analysis. Paul writes, "May the Lord guide your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ"<sup>194</sup>. According to Theodoret, a short scriptural message is that we need both good intentions and co-operation from above. In addition, there is also a Trinitarian aspect to this passage in the fact that there are three divine names in the exhortation:

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<sup>192</sup> Pásztori-Kupán asserts that Theodoret extends the Nicene term ὁμοούσιος to the Spirit, too. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 29.

<sup>193</sup> See 2.Tim. 3:16. *Ad II Tim.*, PG 82, 849. Trans. Hill, 245-246.

<sup>194</sup> 2. Thess. 3:5.



Lord (*Κύριος*), God (*Θεός*) and Christ (*Χριστός*). The three names do not include a specific name for the third Person. Theodoret asserts that Paul clearly calls the all-Holy Spirit as Lord (*Κύριος*) in this passage. His argument is that in another Biblical passage, in the Second Letter to the Corinthians,<sup>195</sup> Paul has literally written that the Lord is the Spirit (*Ὁ δὲ Κύριος τὸ Πνεῦμά ἐστιν*). This unity is attested in another passage, in the Second Letter to Thessalonians, as well.<sup>196</sup> Theodoret states that all the three Persons belong to the Trinity since they are listed together (*συνηριθμημένον*). Even though God is one, in oneness, there is God, the Son of God and the all-Holy Spirit, according to the previous expression.<sup>197</sup>

Theodoret expresses the full unity of the Trinity through the communication of names. He does not accept any expression that would describe chance or lack in the divine nature. The Trinitarian God, in every *προσῶπα*, cannot be located in any limitation of time or imperfect human stages. The divine *φύσις* cannot be transformed into the likeness of a human, for it is always substantially unchangeable. When we talk of imperfect and limited properties, we talk of the human *φύσις*, which remains equal to all human *φύσεις*. Here, Theodoret seems to make an exception regarding unifying naming. Limiting qualities only pertain to those whose *φύσις* originated at birth. Limitations of time are united with subjects that have a birth, just as limitations of time themselves have their birth at creation. Only human beings have all three Biblical limitations of time, which are called *the ages*. First, the period from the formation of the world to its consummation is called the age. Second, the length of the life of every being is called the age. Third, the life to come is also called the age. These examples indicate that ages are related to created natures from the creation to the end of the world and even to eternity. They are not related to the Creating one.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>195</sup> 2. Cor 3.17.

<sup>196</sup> *Ad II Thes.*, PG 82, 669. Trans. Hill, 131.

<sup>197</sup> “Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ εἶπεν, ὅτι οὐδεὶς Θεὸς ἕτερος εἰ μὴ εἶς, ἐκήρυττε δὲ καὶ τὸν Χριστὸν Θεόν, καὶ τὸ πανάγιον δὲ ὡσαύτως Πνεῦμα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συνηριθμεῖ, τοῖς δὲ τὴν ἀκριβῆ θεολογίαν οὐδέπω μεμαθηκόσιν ἀμφοτέρωθεν πῶς εἶς Θεός, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ μέντοι καὶ τοῦ ἀναγίου Πνεύματος συνηριθμημένον·”, *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 288. Trans. Hill, 191.

<sup>198</sup> “Αἰὼν τοίνυν ἐστὶ τὸ τῇ κτιστῇ φύσει παρεξυγμένον διάστημα. Τῶν αἰώνων δὲ ποιητὴν εἴρηκε τὸν Υἱόν, ἀϊδίον αὐτὸν εἶναι διδάσκων, καὶ παιδεύων ἡμᾶς, ὡς αἰεὶ ἦν παντὸς οὐτινοσοῦν περκεείμενος χρονικοῦ διαστήματος. Οὕτω περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς ἡ Παλαιὰ Γραφή λέγει· Ὁ ὑπάρχων πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, ἀντὶ τοῦ, Ὁ αἰεὶ ὢν. Εἴτα, ἐπειδὴ Υἱὸν εἰπὼν ἀϊδίον, αὐτὸν προσηγόρευσεν·”, *Ad Hebr.* PG 82, 680. Trans. Hill, 139.

To conclude, everything that is attributed to the divine nature is, accordingly, attributed eternally to each person of the Trinity. When it comes to God's impassibility, it follows that there can be no change in that property either. Thus, all altering properties are to be attributed to humanity and not to the divinity. Through every age of history, the divine nature remains the same. It is worth noting that Theodoret expresses the commonly accepted Trinitarian concepts of *ὁμοούσιος* and *ὁμοούσιον* by means of the communication of names in his Biblical interpretation. If he uses the same method of interpretation to describe the *communicatio idiomatum* between Christ's two natures, he obviously means more than insubstantial communication.

### 3.4. The Eternal Divine Nature Cannot Be Absent from Human Lives for its Eternal and Essential Love

Theodoret understands God's Trinitarian nature (*οὐσία/φύσις*) to be eternal, unchangeable and immutable, for it is independent of all possible limitations of time and of any outside affections.<sup>199</sup> The divine properties are eternally the same with regard to the whole Trinity. However, God's *ἀπάθεια* does not mean that God would be apathetic, immoveable and ignorant of human life and experiences. On the contrary, he intends to take care of and love people, but this occurs without any change. God continually executes this warm love in his divine nature. Thus, *ἀπάθεια* for Theodoret does not mean that God distances himself from man to protect his immutability. On the contrary, He is involved in human life, and He never ceases to be involved, according to His divine nature. In this sense it is possible, on one hand, to say that Divinity is immutably impassible. On the other hand, He is immutably

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<sup>199</sup> “ἀλλὰ τρεῖς μὲν τὰς ὑποστάσεις, μίαν δὲ τῆς Τριάδος τὴν φύσιν ἀσώματον, ἄτρεπτον, ἀναλλοίωτον, ἀτελεύτητον, ἀθάνατον, ἄπειρον, ἄφθαρτον, ἀπερίγραπτον, ἀπερίληπτον, ἀόρατον, ἀσαφῆ, ἄρρητον, ἄφραστον, ἀκατάληπτον, ἀνέφικτον, ἀπερινόητον, αὐτοζωὴν, φῶς νοερὸν, πηγὴν ἀγαθῶν, θησαυρὸν σοφίας, δημιουργὸν τῶν ὅλων, κυβερνῶσαν τὰ πάντα, σοφίαν ἰθύνουσαν τὸ τῆς κτίσεως σκάφος.” SC, *Trinité*, 330. *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1188.

”Rather we speak of three *ὑποστάσεις* but one nature of the Trinity, (a nature which is) uncorporeal, unchangeable, immutable, endless, immortal, infinite, incorruptible, indescribable, boundless, invisible, indistinguishable, ineffable, inexpressible, incomprehensible, imperceptible, invincible, self-existent, spiritual light, the fountainhead of benefits, the thesaurus of wisdom, Creator of the universe and provider of all, the Wisdom steering the ship of creation.” Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 137.

passible (when accepting involvement in human passible life), though this does not denote any vulnerability on the part of the Divinity.<sup>200</sup>

It is appropriate to describe Theodoret's conception of God's love as a spring that flows eternally from the Trinity to the whole of humankind. Love is constantly in motion, both within the Trinity as well as flowing outward from God to men. When Paul exhorts to give thanks to the God and Father who enables us to share the inheritance of the saints in light, according to Theodoret, this is an expression of the active love of God. Theodoret contends that the apostle presents the ineffable character of the divine loving kindness (τῆς θείας φιλανθρωπίας τὸ ἄρρήτον) in the form of thanksgiving. Theodoret notes that Paul also called the Ruler Christ by the name "Son of love" (Υἱὸν δὲ ἀγάπης), which means that he is also beloved within the Trinity, not as a creature or a slave, but as the Son. He is not, in fact, only the Son of Love (ἀγάπης) but the beloved (ἀγαπητὸς) Son. Theodoret compares this relationship to the human relationship between Abraham and Isaac. It was said to Abraham: "*take your beloved (ἀγαπητὸν) son*"<sup>201</sup>. God's love is evident both in his nature and in his actions.<sup>202</sup> Thus, divine impassibility does not exclude the continuous love of God.

When Theodoret interprets the message of Old Testament sacrifices, he proposes that the Divinity takes on a new necessary role in order to reveal his benevolence to men through the sacrifices. First, God revealed his benevolence to the high priest, who served in the sacrifices. Second, the Ruler Christ took on the role of the high priest and also received benevolence from God. However, at the same time, Christ preserved his divine role and was with God to show benevolence to men. Third, the whole altar of sacrifice where the acts of mercy took place can be seen as the Ruler Christ himself, and in it is his self sacrifice as the victim to be offered. For his "loving" ἀπάθεια, God does not refuse to be involved in passible sacrifices.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 32-33.

<sup>201</sup> Gen. 22:2

<sup>202</sup> *Ad Col. PG 82*, 597. Trans. Hill, 87.

<sup>203</sup> "Ὁν προέθετο ὁ Θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ τῆς πίστεως, ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. Τὸ ἱλαστήριον πέταλον ἦν χρυσοῦν· ἐπέκειτο δὲ τῇ κιβωτῇ· ἐκατέρωθεν δὲ εἶχε τὰ τῶν Χερουβὶμ ἐκτυπώματα. Ἐκεῖθεν ᾧ ἀρχιερεῖ λειτουργοῦντι ἐγένετο δῆλη τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ εὐμένεια. Διδάσκει τοίνυν ὁ θεῖος Απόστολος, ὡς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἱλαστήριον ὁ Δεσπότης ἐστὶ Χριστός. Ἐκεῖνο γὰρ τὸ παλαιὸν τοῦτου τὸν τύπον ἐπλήρου. Ἀρμόττει δὲ αὐτῷ ὡς ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ ὄνομα, οὐχ ὡς Θεῷ. Ὡς γὰρ Θεός, αὐτὸς διὰ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου χρηματίζει " , *Ad Rom. PG 82*, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 63-65.

According to Theodoret, God cannot be absent from human lives because of love. The presence to human life originally derives from his divine nature. It is characteristic (τὴν οἰκειονομίας) of God to love all people actively. He is not distant but is involved in human life. In his ἀπάθεια, he is patient since he had to be longsuffering (μακροθυμῆσας) in order to carry out his plan to prepare a remedy of salvation for the people. God was equally not immune to negative emotions since he was insulted (ὕβρισμένος) by the fall. Still, he was willing to love.<sup>204</sup> God's love is voluntary since he is not only able to love but he is able to hate as well. However, God's hatred is concealed in the punishment to come. He does not lose control, and He does not practice his hatred with passion.<sup>205</sup> God threatens with hatred only to instil proper fear into the hearts of his opponents. Theodoret interprets Paul's description of God's righteousness and tolerance as an admission of the divinity admits that it is itself affected because of the weakness of human beings.<sup>206</sup> The impassible God has emotions, but they are in good control. The concept of God's ἀπάθεια is presented here in a platonic way. Theodoret follows his Antiochian tradition, according to the Cappadocian Fathers. They had adopted platonic concepts to a greater degree than the Alexandrian theologians, who were more inclined to support Stoic conceptions that tried to get rid of all emotions. As Plato put it in his tripartite presentation of the soul, the ideal is to have emotions under the good control of the controlling part of the soul.<sup>207</sup>

God showed his characteristic goodness, exercising longsuffering to the greatest extend towards the people who transgressed, and he made righteousness clear to everyone. Now, to prove that it was not without the purpose, that he put up with the people who transgressed but to prepare ahead of time this remedy of salvation for them.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>204</sup> “Τὴν ἄφατον τοῦ Θεοῦ φιλανθρωπίαν ἐδήλωσεν. Οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἡμῖν, φησὶ, κατηλλάγη, καίτοι αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως ὕβρισμένος· ἀλλ’ ἡμᾶς ἐαυτῷ κατήλλαξεν, οὐκ ἀνθρώπῳ μεσίτῃ χρησάμενος, ἀλλὰ τὸν μονογενῆ Υἱὸν τῆς εἰρήνης ἀποφύνας μεσίτην. Ἐνεχείρισε δὲ καὶ ἡμῖν τὰ τῶν καταλλαγῶν εὐαγγέλια.”, *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 412. Trans. Hill, 273-274.

<sup>205</sup> “Ὅργην Θεοῦ τὴν τιμωρίαν καλεῖ, οὐκ ἐπειδὴ πάθει κολάζει ὁ Θεός· ἀλλ’ ἵνα τῷ ὀνόματι φοβήσῃ τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας. Ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ δὲ αὐτὴν ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι ἔφη, ὡς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐκεῖθεν ἐπιφανησομένου. Τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Κύριος ἔφη· «Τότε ὤψεσθε τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ πολλῆς δόξης.»”, *Ad Rom.* PG 82, 61. Trans. Hill, 51.

<sup>206</sup> *Ad Rom.* PG 82, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 63-65.

<sup>207</sup> See Knuuttila 2013, 65, 463-464.

<sup>208</sup> Καὶ τὴν ἀγαθότητα τὴν οἰκείαν ἔδειξεν ὁ Θεός, ἐπὶ πλεῖστον μακροθυμῆσας τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παρανομοῦσι, καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ δήλην πεποίηκεν ἅπασιν *Ad Rom.* PG 82, 85. Trans. Hill, 64-65.

Theodoret continues that God completely sees the mind-set of people and he is looking for virtues.<sup>209</sup> God is transcendent but, in his love, he does not hide himself behind his transcendence. God shows this by drawing near to humankind and by becoming a man. Theodoret vividly describes how God has persuaded people to notice how he has shown kindness to them. Due to this, Theodoret describes more emotions of God. God *grieved* over the people's ingratitude and he again reminded them of his benevolence.<sup>210</sup> Love brings God near to men, but it *does not cause any harm to God*. God, again, totally controls his emotions and desires. In addition, Theodoret, in agreement with all theologians of his time, would not assign to the Christian God emotions with in connotation that he would be unjust in his hatred. God is not subject to emotions such as greed, anxiety, lust or fear.<sup>211</sup> God is completely transcendent, according to his impassibility, since he cannot be harmed in any way. However, God is just for his eternal love for the people.

However, Theodoret contends that, due to the transcendence of the divinity, it always has limits on its practice of love. To explain that statement, Theodoret interprets the offering of sacrifices in the old and the new Covenant. Both of them demanded the shedding of blood. In the old Covenant, God ordained the sacrifice of animals. Since the nature of God is immortal (*ἡ θεία φύσις ἀθάνατος*), he himself needed this type of sacrifice to realize sacrificial death. Theodoret implicitly refers to God's will to sacrifice himself according to his love, and he asserts that, through the blood of the type (see below), which the priests performed, God fulfilled the death of the sacrifice (*διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν ἱερείων τὸν τύπον ἐπλήρωσε τοῦ θανάτου, καὶ τὴν διαθήκην ἐκύρωσεν*). It was not possible for God to take part in sacrifice without the instrument of the victims. This was the type, and the reality was to come in the new Covenant when God the Word became man and took a mortal body.<sup>212</sup> The divine immortality, as a mode of divine *ἀπάθεια*, sets the limits for the practice of love.

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<sup>209</sup> *Ad Rom. PG 153-155*. Trans. Hill, 101.

<sup>210</sup> “Ἦδει, φησὶν, ἄνωθεν ὁ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς, καὶ τοὺς φύλακας ἐσομένους τοῦ νόμου, καὶ τοὺς τοῦτον παραβήσεσθαι μέλλοντας· οὐδαμῶς τοίνυν οἱ ἀπιστήσαντες ἐλυμήναντο τὰς θείας εὐεργεσίας. Κἂν γὰρ ἅπαντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι περὶ αὐτὸν ἀχάριστοι γένωνται, οὐκ ἐλαττώσει τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν δόξαν ἢ τούτων ἀχαριστία.”, *Ad Rom. PG 82, 77*. Trans. Hill, 60.

<sup>211</sup> See Gavriluk 2006, 6.

<sup>212</sup> *Ad Hebr. PG 82, 744*. Trans. Hill, 174.

Immutably, God has all wisdom (*σοφία*) and knowledge in himself, since he is called and *named* the wise (*σοφός*) in the Bible. Everything to come in human history is included in his divine wisdom. God has a divine plan (*ἡ οἰκονόμια*) for the whole of future.<sup>213</sup> Since Theodoret does not accept any change or limitation of time for the Divinity, it is natural that he understands the future to be totally and eternally present in God's mind. Theodoret presents this principle by emphasizing that there was no change of mind in God (*οὐκ ἐκ μεταμελείας ὁ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς ἐπὶ ταύτην ἐλήλυθε*).<sup>214</sup> Since God had the plan, nothing could be added to His mind, for the divine nature is always without any need (*ἀνενδεής*). God was also the only entity that did not gain any remedy through the incarnation.<sup>215</sup> The motive of the divine plan is all constituted by God's immutable love. He wanted to give of himself everything to mankind. He wanted to create the world only through his loving kindness, and he would never leave his creation untended.<sup>216</sup> God remained immutable and impassible in spite of his foresight of and plan for the future since he did not need or gain anything in the process of incarnation.

According to Theodoret, God foresees everything beforehand in his complete wisdom. The pattern of the divine plan surpasses all human understanding. Yet, when the plan comes true, it exercises God's providence. Providence takes place necessarily, for it is irresistible even to all unseen powers.<sup>217</sup> When exercising providence, the Divinity shows its unlimited nature. Its presence is everywhere, and it is independent of limitations of time. God is capable of making his plan for times and eternity without error. He does not need to change his plan afterwards. He is not affected by humans to change his plan.<sup>218</sup> However, this does not mean the

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<sup>213</sup> According to Theodoret, it is not possible to state this as "God has made the plan" because everything pertaining to God is eternally the same.

<sup>214</sup> *Ad Rom. PG 82, 45. Trans. Hill, 43.*

<sup>215</sup> "ὁ δὲ τούτων Θεὸς, ὁ Δεσπότης, λέγω, Χριστὸς, οὐ μίαν τινὰ ὠκονόμησε χρεῖαν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πᾶν ἐνανθρωπήσας κατώρθωσε, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπραγματεύσατο σωτηρίαν", *Ad Hebr. PG 82, 677-680.*

"ἀλλ' ὡς ἄνθρωπος· οὔτε ὡς Θεὸς διὰ τῆς πείρας μεμάθηκε τὰ ἡμέτερα, ἀλλ' ὡς Θεὸς καὶ δημιουργὸς γινώσκει τὰ πάντα σαφῶς", *Ad Hebr. PG 82, 697, see also 677, 692, 648. Trans. Hill, 148, 136, 145-146.*

<sup>216</sup> *Ad Rom. PG 82, 61. Trans. Hill, 51.*

<sup>217</sup> *Ad Rom. PG 82, 184. Trans. Hill, 116-117.*

<sup>218</sup> Theodoret interprets Paul's saying of "the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but on account of the one subjecting it in hope" in Rom 8.19 in relation to God's foresight. Theodoret explains that all visible creation had a mortal nature due to Adam's Fall to come, which God knew beforehand. "ἐπειδήπερ τῶν ὅλων ὁ Ποιητὴς προέώρα τοῦ Ἀδὰμ τὴν παράβασιν, καὶ τὴν πενεχθησομένην αὐτῷ τοῦ θανάτου ψῆφον.", *Ad Rom. PG 82, 136-137. Trans. Hill, 91-92.*

predestination of people for good or for bad, but rather the knowledge of everything beforehand. God granted men the free power to choose, but he knew what they would choose. Paul wrote to Ephesians, “Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world predestining us in love for adoption for him<sup>219</sup>”. Paul’s text indicates the predestination of the chosen people for salvation. Accordingly, Theodoret sees here predetermination, but not concerning the division of people into chosen ones and others, but concerning “our situation” (*τα καθ ἡμᾶς*) and “our calling” (*τὴν ἡμετέραν κλήσιν*). God foresaw (*προειδεν*) mankind, loved mankind (*ἠγαπήσε*) and planned mankind’s situation and calling to make salvation come true.<sup>220</sup> God’s impassibility had not failed even on a minor scale as vulnerability of the mind by forcing God to change the Divine plan.

According to Theodoret, God prefers man’s virtues. God is looking for an excellent mind-set.<sup>221</sup> Yet, the quality of the mind-set is dependent on God’s good will, God’s calling and his power to have mercy on whomever he wishes. Theodoret says that God has the right to punish people who have transgressed and to have mercy on them as well. Not everyone who has committed a crime has to pay a penalty. God may make exceptional decisions. However, when a man makes his decision and chooses in his mind an attitude towards God, it is up to his own free decision, not to God’s.<sup>222</sup>

I mean, if you were not independent and had no free will to choose what has to be done, instead being subject to the necessity of the divine will, you would keep silent in the fashion of lifeless things, content with the arrangements. But, being endowed with reason, you say and do what you please and also have no liking for what happens, looking instead for the reasons for the divine arrangement.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Eph. 1:4-5.

<sup>220</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 509-513. Trans. Hill, 33-36. On the book of Jeremiah, Theodoret interprets chapter 1, verses 4-5, “*Καὶ ἐγένετο λόγος Κυρίου πρὸς με, λέγων· Πρὸ τοῦ με πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ, ἐπίσταμαί σε· καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξελθεῖν ἐκ μήτρας, ἠγάκά σε*”, “*The word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you left the womb I consecrated you*”. “The Election was not without basis: knowledge preceded it. He had knowledge, note, and then he consecrated, for he knows everything before its coming to be.” *On Prof. I.*, 23. PG 81, 500. Trans. Hill.

<sup>221</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 153. Trans. Hill, 100-101.

<sup>222</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 157. Trans. Hill, 103. Theodoret asserts “free will” in the practice of perfection, through Biblical passages: “Let anyone accept this who can”, “If you want to be perfect” and “when you fast”. These are not Law, but they come from free will. *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 524. Trans. Hill, 40-41.

<sup>223</sup> *Εἰ γὰρ οὐκ αὐτεξούσιος ἦσθα, οὐδὲ γνώμη τὸ πρακτέον ἡροῦ, ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ βουλήματι ἀνάγκη ἐδούλευες, παραπλησίως ἂν τοῖς ἀψύχοις ἐσίγησας, τὰ οἰκονομούμενα στέργων. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ λόγῳ τετίμησαι, καὶ τὰ δοκοῦντά σοι καὶ λέγεις καὶ πράττεις, καὶ οὐκ ἀγαπᾷς τὰ γινόμενα, ἀλλὰ τῶν θεῶν οἰκονομιῶν τὰς αἰτίας ἐπιζητεῖς*, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 157. Trans. Hill, 103.

Freedom is given to men because of God's justice. If God punishes, he always does it for fare reason. Man is not like dead material. He has quite a different position in relation to God and in relation to inhuman things like a clay vessel, which does not argue against its potter. People resist, object and embrace evil willingly or accept the hardships of virtue, the practice of which would execute God's will and purpose. God justly punishes sinners for presuming they have sinned by free will, and, on the contrary, justly gives the presence of loving kindness to those who deserve it, and God decides to love them by his free will.<sup>224</sup> Deeds that are done against free will enjoy a degree of pardon.<sup>225</sup> God is looking for a fellowship of faith (*ἀλλὰ τῆς πίστεως τὴν κοινωνίαν ζητεῖτῆς*) with a man.<sup>226</sup> God gives his grace, not to everyone, but to those who love the Lord and, in addition, keep his life-giving laws. As the matter of fact, the Lord removed the sins of believers only. However, Theodoret also uses an expression that refers to the salvation of the entire world, saying that, for the world, the Lord underwent the passion. Although the free will of man causes division among the people, which God foresees, it does not cause any limitation on God's all-loving nature. The reason why the only-begotten Son of God became flesh was to grant salvation to all people, both masters and servants, by causing them to abandon lawless life in addition to godlessness.<sup>227</sup>

The unlimited God sees all human attitudes beforehand and has reserved the passions for them. His plan for the future derives from this knowledge and from his passions. However, it is his eternal love that prevails throughout the whole plan. Regarding hatred, God practises control over his feelings and reserves the right time and place to express them, even at the end of the world.<sup>228</sup> Before that, people have the opportunity to make correct decisions. It is said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart and afterwards punished him. Yet, it was not the purpose of God to cause evil to come to Pharaoh. On the contrary, the primary decision for bad is originally man's own. God is not the author of anybody's wickedness. Instead, God exercises

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<sup>224</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 157. Trans. Hill, 103.

<sup>225</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 753. Trans. Hill, 179.

<sup>226</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 161. Trans. Hill, 105-106

<sup>227</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 557, *Ad Hebr.*, PG 745, *Ad I Tim.*, PG 82, 828, *Ad Tat.*, PG 82, 865. Trans. Hill, 57, 175, 229, 256.

<sup>228</sup> “Οὐ γὰρ ἐξουσία τὴν ἡμετέραν ὀκονόμησε σωτηρίαν, οὐδὲ προστάγματι καὶ λόγῳ κατέλυσε τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κράτος, ἀλλ’ ἐκέρασε τῷ δικαίῳ τὸν ἔλεον“, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 60-61. Trans. Hill, 51.



longsuffering in his customary fashion. Pharaoh himself mistook God's longsuffering as weakness and, counting on it, he himself augmented his own disobedience. According to this line of thought, God allowed the growing wickedness of Pharaoh and gave him so much power and publicity in order to protect other people from evil. As the surgeon makes a remedy for venom, so did God make a remedy for the evil one for the benefit of others. When God punished Pharaoh, it was a just condemnation. God inflicted manifold punishment on him and demonstrated to all people his characteristic power.<sup>229</sup> Theodoret's conception of the free will given by God to human beings is an important principle for understanding his conception of the properties of Christ's human nature as well. There are points in Christ's human life where Theodoret considers it necessary to limit the role of the divine nature in order to equally guarantee the attribution of free will to Christ the Lord as other people have free will.

Salvation is called grace, for God executes his plan by his divine liberality.<sup>230</sup> Even if Theodoret describes all people entirely free to perform their choice of faith, he still describes them as guided in many ways by the grace of God. The God of all is one and the Creator of all is one. It is not possible that he would take care of some and leave others neglected. Consequently, he offers salvation to all who believe.<sup>231</sup> God's grace has the power to overcome all human power. When Paul wrote that he was prevented from going to Rome, Theodoret sees in it an indication to the divine plan of the governing of God's grace. God's grace governs in the world as it wishes. Previously, the Law was set to rule for a time, after which its time was to end and become a support to grace. Theodoret asserts that everything shows the excellence of Christ's victory since Paul put the Law and all inspired authors in the role of witnesses to grace.<sup>232</sup> God's divine plan is soteriological. Through the grace of the Spirit (*διὰ τῆς τοῦ Πνεύματος χάριτος*), souls become dwelling places of saving

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<sup>229</sup> “καὶ ἐκ τῆς τούτου πονηρίας τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀλεξίκακον κατεσκεύασε φάρμακον. Καὶ καθάπερ οἱ ἱατροὶ οὐκ αὐτοὶ τὰς ἐχίδνας δημιουργοῦσιν, ἐκ δὲ τούτων ὠφέλιμον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις κατασκευάζουσι φάρμακον· οὕτως ὁ Θεὸς ἠβούλετο μὲν τὸν Φαραὼ τῆς τιμωρίας μὴ μεταλαχεῖν· ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἰς πολλὴν ἐκείνος θηριωδίαν ἐξώκειλε, παντοδαπὰς μὲν αὐτῷ τιμωρίας ἐπήγαγε, τὴν δὲ οἰκείαν πᾶσιν νθρώποις ἐπέδειξε δύναμιν. Διό φησιν·”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 157-160. Trans. Hill, 103-104.

<sup>230</sup> “ἀλλ’ ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ διέσωσε χάρις. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ χάρις ἡ σωτηρία καλεῖται, ἐπειδὴ κατὰ θείαν φιλοτιμίαν γεγένηται.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 173. Trans. Hill, 111.

<sup>231</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 85, 88. Trans. Hill, 65.

<sup>232</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84. Trans. Hill, 63-64.

Christ.<sup>233</sup> Salvation comes from God to man through the grace of God. God's grace is described as an active subject. It also calls people to be its instruments. The calling of the instrumental persons is the hidden work of God. Grace calls people in the way that even the most holy men are sometimes ignorant of its process.<sup>234</sup>

Theodoret also uses expressions that indicate Trinitarian love in relation to the Spirit. Like wisdom, love is completely shared in the Trinitarian unity. The anthropological and soteriological concept of "grace educating man" can be seen in Christ's person due to the Trinitarian quality of the Divine nature. Theodoret pays attention to Paul's statement in which he names Christ the Lord as both the wise (*σοφός*) and the wisdom (*σοφία*).<sup>235</sup> He deduces that the third Trinitarian Person shares equally the same wisdom. Theodoret assesses as much in describing the work of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit is God since the Scriptures are his own, as they are divinely inspired.<sup>236</sup> The whole Trinity is involved in the plan of incarnation. The Son alone did not plan the mystery of the incarnation, but also the Father, in his own person, partakes in this providential arrangement.<sup>237</sup> Christ the Lord was involved in the divine plan in person to put into effect the purpose of the Law.<sup>238</sup> Theodoret refutes Docetism's notion of the incarnation and judges the heretic concept of Simon. According to Theodoret, Simon and his followers denied the assumption of the flesh, for they claimed that the incarnation occurred only as a figment of the imagination. Theodoret sees God's foreseeing wisdom in Paul's writing since he claims that Paul is writing beforehand against Simon. Paul's argument is aimed at Simon's concept of incarnation, and it urges the reader to always be mindful of the generation, according to the flesh, from David's offspring and of the resurrection of the dead. Theodoret pays attention to three of Paul's statements, the first referring to generation (*τὴν γέννησιν*), the second to passion (*τὸ πάθος*) and the third to the bloodline (*τὸ γένος*). He asserts that these have been denied by the enemies of the truth. Christ was ready to be involved in the *genesis* and

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<sup>233</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 532. Trans. Hill, 44-45.

<sup>234</sup> "καὶ τοῦ νόμου, ἔδειξε τὴν τῆς νίκης ὑπερβολὴν, αὐτὸν τὸν νόμον καὶ τοὺς προφῆτας μάρτυρας ἀποφύνας τῆς χάριτος." *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 36-37. Trans. Hill, 35-36.

<sup>235</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 208. Trans. Hill, 129.

<sup>236</sup> "Θεόπνευστον δὲ Γραφὴν τὴν πνευματικὴν ὠνόμασεν. Ἡ γὰρ τοῦ θείου Πνεύματος χάρις διὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐφθέγγετο. Θεὸς τοίνυν τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, εἶπερ ἀληθῶς, κατὰ τὸν Ἀπόστολον, θεόπνευστος τοῦ Πνεύματος ἡ Γραφή." *Ad II Tim.* PG 82, 849. Trans. Hill, 245-246.

<sup>237</sup> *Ad Gal.* PG 82, 461. Trans. Hill, 1-2.

<sup>238</sup> "Εἰ τοίνυν ἡ κατὰ τὸν Δεσπότην Χριστὸν οἰκονομία εἰς ἔργον ἤνεγκε τὸν τοῦ νόμου σκοπὸν, οὐ κατηγορίας ἄξιος, ἀλλ' ἐὼφημίας, ὁ νόμος." *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 129. Trans. Hill, 88-89.

in the τὸ πάθος in taking his place in David's bloodline.<sup>239</sup> Even if God was insulted (ὕβρισμένος) by the fall, he was still ready to reconcile with humankind. He did not want to employ any human being for the mission but was ready to make the only-begotten Son the mediator of peace. Theodoret is ready to ascribe the divine name of the Only-begotten as the subject of suffering as well.<sup>240</sup> God intended to use his grace as the instrument in Christ's person.

It was God's plan to be in a relationship with human beings so that God's existence would be seen by people in the created world. Theodoret relates this to the general revelation of God. God's inconceivable wisdom was manifested through the created world, but people were not willing to receive it. The people were unwilling to benefit from this source. They had the capability to receive it since their perception was rather dependent on their will. Theodoret refers to Paul here as well: "you see in the wisdom of God, that the world did not know God through wisdom. God decided through the folly of the message to save the believers" (1. Cor 1:21). Theodoret explains that first wisdom is given to human beings as a result of their rationality.<sup>241</sup> In their rationality they have the knowledge of the natural law (φυσικὴν γνῶσιν). They are able to know what they have to do, they have skills and sciences, and they are able to know God's existence. Second, they receive wisdom when contemplating created realities. They can see the magnitude of the heavens, the beauty of the sun, the array of the stars, the expanse of the earth and the sea, the diversity of plants and animals and other things.<sup>242</sup>

Then people received the Law, and God called mediating men, inspired prophets, for His use. They foretold the mystery of God's plan, and afterwards the plan was

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<sup>239</sup> *Ad II Tim.*, PG 82, 840. Trans. Hill, 240-241.

<sup>240</sup> "καίτοι αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως ὑβρισμένος· ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ κατήλλαξεν, οὐκ ἀνθρώπῳ μεσίτῃ χρησάμενος, ἀλλὰ τὸν μονογενῆ Υἱὸν τῆς εἰρήνης ἀποφύνας μεσίτην", *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 412, 425. Trans. Hill, 273, 280.

<sup>241</sup> The Stoic conception of reason brought out the similarity of human reason with divine reason, see Posidonius in Galens "De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis" 5.6.4 (326. 22-3). Knuuttila 2004, 58. Knuuttila cites *The Hellenistic Philosophers, Therefore, living in agreement with nature comes to the end, which is in accordance with the nature of oneself and that of the whole, engaging in no activity wont to be forbidden by the universal law, which is the right reason pervading everything, and identical to Zeus, who is the director of the administration of existing things*. Long and Sedley 1987, 63C.

<sup>242</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 236. Trans. Hill, 162-163.

manifested in reality.<sup>243</sup> Giving the Law was not completely indicative of ignorance, rather through the Law people got a more precise grasp of distinctions that pertained to nature.<sup>244</sup> Finally, wisdom was revealed in the Savior. Theodoret thought parallels that of the Alexandrian Catechetical school leaders Clement and Origen. In accordance with them, he expresses the divine Word (*Λογος*) simultaneously as the incarnate Christ and as the cosmic principle of intelligibility. It is also possible to see in his argumentation references to the Stoic doctrine of *cosmic reason* and to the Platonic concept of *ideas as divine thoughts*.<sup>245</sup> Humankind has not successfully received wisdom through the first two sources, and for his love, God has given them the last one.<sup>246</sup> However, what was prescribed in the natural law, according to Theodoret, remains in force even in the New Covenant, after the coming of the Savior.<sup>247</sup>

The mystery of incarnation (*θείας ενανθρωποσεως*) is at the very core of God's divine plan. It is always an object of adoration for Theodoret, something awesome, in it's teaching of God's lovingkindness to all who are able to understand it. Some people are limited by the gloom of unbelief, and they should receive the illumination of light for their mind's ridicule. If rightly understood, God's providence and immutability is behind all things. Theodoret says that he who created man always exercises providence towards human beings and completely achieves his goals.<sup>248</sup> This certainty of providence and of the prophecies, which predicted the events of salvation history, reveal that there was no change in the heart of God in any process (*οὐκ ἐκ μεταμελείας ὁ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς ἐπὶ ταύτην ἐλήλυθε*).<sup>249</sup> He saw, beforehand, those who will obey his law and those who will not. The disobedience of the people does not diminish his glory.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 208. Trans. Hill, 129.

<sup>244</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 117. Trans. Hill, 82.

<sup>245</sup> See Knuuttila 2004, 115 and Grillmeier 1975, 89-94, 133-149.

<sup>246</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 236. Trans. Hill, 162-163.

<sup>247</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 549. Trans. Hill, 53-54.

<sup>248</sup> Theodoret expresses God's free will and power by saying that "the divine grace governs as it wishes".

*Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 56. Trans. Hill, 48-49.

<sup>249</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 45. Trans. Hill, 42-43.

<sup>250</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 77. Trans. Hill, 60.

The concept of the free will of man is very important with regard to the position of the human nature of Christ. If human nature is defined as having free will to decide and to accept divine guidance or not, it is an indication that the divinity does not want to be in total control over human experiences and decisions. Theodoret defines every event of history as an execution God's eternal plan. God loves and is merciful. By grace he prepares, saves, educates and protects man in his life and faith. Still, every man has free will to decide. There is no predestination according to which God would force man be saved. In accordance, Christ's natures should follow the same pattern too. Theodoret expresses the dominance of grace in a very Augustinian way. Equally, he sees total dependence on grace in the process of faith in man. It is like Augustine put it, that grace even builds the free will in its work.<sup>251</sup> Theodoret also emphasises the capabilities of man's reason and free will, saying that "being endowed with reason, you say and do what you please and also have no liking for what happens, looking instead for the reasons for the divine arrangement". God, in his divinity, has free will to love and give grace to man. Man, in his humanity, has free will to choose to obey or not God's desire to give His goodness to him. Man is not subject to the necessity of divine will.<sup>252</sup>

### 3.5. The Trinitarian Unity Sets the Limit for the Presence in Human Life

While commenting on the I Cor 15.27-28, Theodoret emphasises Trinitarian unity especially as it relates to Christ's involvement in the subjection, which God will carry out according his divine plan. Paul writes, "now when he said, all things are subjected, it is clear this excludes the one subjecting everything to him. When all things are subjected to him, then also the Son himself will also be subjected to the

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<sup>251</sup> "Do we then by grace make void free will? God forbid! Nay, rather we establish free will. For even as the law by faith, so free will by grace, is not made void, but established. For neither is the law fulfilled, except by free will, but by the law is the knowledge of sin, by faith the acquisition of grace against sin, by grace the healing of the soul from the disease of sin, by the health of the soul freedom of will, by free will the love of righteousness, by love of righteousness the accomplishment of the law. Accordingly, as the law is not made void, but is established through faith, since faith procures grace whereby the law is fulfilled; so free will is not made void through grace, but is established, since grace cures the will whereby righteousness is freely loved." Augustine, *Of Spirit and the Letter*, Chapter 30. (trans. Peter Holmes). URL: <http://www.logoslibrary.org/augustine/spirit/30.html>.

<sup>252</sup> "Ἀπόβλεπον εἰς τὸν τοῦ κεραμέως πηλὸν, ὃς τῆς λογικῆς διακρίσεως ἄμοιρος ὢν, οὐκ ἀντιλέγει τῷ πλάττοντι· ἀλλὰ κἂν εἰς ἀτίμον σκεῦους ἐργασίαν ἀφορισθῇ, σιγῇ τὸ γινόμενον δέχεται. Σὺ δὲ ἀντιτείνεις καὶ ἀντιλέγεις. Οὐ τοίνυν φυσικαῖς ἀνάγκαις προσδέδεται, οὐδὲ παρανομεῖς παρὰ νόμῳ, ἀλλ' ἐκὼν ἀσπάζῃ τὴν πονηρίαν, καὶ αὐθαιρέτως καταδέχῃ τοὺς πόνους τῆς ἀρετῆς. Ὁρθῇ οὖν ἄρα καὶ δικαία τοῦ Θεοῦ τῶν ὅλων ἡ ψῆφος. Ἐνδίκως γὰρ κολάζει τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας, ὡς γνώμῃ τοῦτο ποιεῖν τολμῶντας", *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 157. Trans. Hill, 103.

one subjecting everything to him”.<sup>253</sup> Theodoret deems it necessary here to recall the biblical doctrine of divine immutability. The whole Trinity, including Christ, cannot be present in every human experience. Not even in his human nature is Christ able to do everything.<sup>254</sup> Subjection under someone’s control would violate Christ’s divine immutability. Any subjection that would be attributed to Christ would absolutely carry the danger of confusing the Trinitarian unity, which was confessed in Nicaea. In commenting on the text of Paul, Theodoret sees it necessary, in the first place, to refute the Arian conception that the Son would have been inferior to or have a different essence from the Father. At first, he asserts that the text is not speaking here about divine nature. The Ruler Christ, in his divinity, cannot be subjected to God the Father. In this case, Theodoret does not persist in saying that it was the human nature of Christ that was subjected. The person of Christ, i.e. the Ruler Christ, would then be subjected to his human nature. This would cause the Trinitarian confusion. Theodoret indicates here how consistently he follows both of his two conceptions, the Trinitarian unity and the Christological unity. He does not give up either of them and creates a new solution in his interpretation.<sup>255</sup>

Theodoret explains that the subjection refers, not straight to the Ruler Christ, but to the future state of all humankind, which the Ruler Christ assumes. In the future, the whole humankind will be subjected to God. The Ruler Christ has made all human lowliness as his own. This concerns both human offences against God, i.e. the disobedience here and now, and the subjection of humanity in the future. Since all people are said to be subjected, Theodoret explains that Christ is also said to be subjected, taking others’ subjection as his own.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 357. Trans. Hill, 228.

<sup>254</sup> Theodoret seems to present here similarities to monophysitism. According to the pattern “Christology from above”, he defends the immutability of divine Christ even according to his human nature. According to Pihkala “Antiochian Christology is like Alexandrian Christology, basically, in spite of profound interest in the human nature”. see also Pihkala 2004, 248-255.

<sup>255</sup> “Καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Υἱὸς ὑποταγέσεται τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα. Οὐ γὰρ μόνον οὐχ ποτάζει ἑαυτῷ τὸν Πατέρα, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν Υἱῷ πρέπουσαν ὑποταγὴν ὑποδέξεται. Ὁ μὲν οὖν θεῖος Ἀπόστολος τὴν ἐκ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς μυθολογίας φρομένην ὑφορώμενος βλάβην, ταῦτα ροστέθεικε, ταπεινότεροις χρησάμενος λόγοις διὰ τὴν ἐκείνων ὠφέλειαν. Εἰπάτωσαν δὲ οἱ ἀντιλέγοντες τῆς ὑποταγῆς ἐκείνης τὸ εἶδος. Καὶ μὴν, εἰ συνιδεῖν ἐθέλουσι τὸ ἀληθές, νῦν ἐπεδείξατο τὴν ὑπακοὴν ἐνανθρωπήσας, καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν πραγματευσάμενος σωτηρίαν. Πῶς οὖν τότε ὑποταγέσεται; τευσάμενος σωτηρίαν. Πῶς οὖν τότε ὑποταγέσεται; πῶς δὲ καὶ τότε παραδώσει τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρί; Εὐρεθήσεται γὰρ, οὕτω τοῦτον νοουμένων, οὐκ ἔχων νῦν τὴν βασιλείαν ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Πατὴρ”, *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 357-360. Trans. Hill, 228-230.

<sup>256</sup> “Οὕτω καὶ τὴν νῦν ἡμῶν ἀπείθειαν, καὶ τὴν τότε ὑποταγὴν οἰκιοῦται, καὶ ἡμῶν μετὰ τὴν τῆς φθορᾶς ἀπαλλαγὴν ὑποτασσομένων, αὐτὸς λέγεται ὑποτάσσεσθαι“, *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 357-360. Trans. Hill, 228-230.

Theodoret follows his method of communication of names faithfully. The trinitarian unity must be unchangeable, and accordingly God and Christ must be fully interchangeable subjects in relation to all works of Christ. In II Cor 13:3-4, Paul writes: “Since you are looking for proof that in me it is Christ who is speaking, who is not weak in your regard but powerful in you? That is to say, if he was crucified in weakness, yet he is alive by God’s power”. Theodoret interprets that the text is talking about Christ in his whole person. There is no alternative because the subject nature belongs to Christ all the time. It was Christ who underwent the suffering of the cross (*του σταυρου το παθος υπεμεινε*) and, similarly, it was Christ, without any division, who endured the natural mortality of the body (*την θνητην του σωματος φυσιν*). Accordingly, it was Christ who became alive, and his life is that of God and the Son of God. As a counterpart to the text of Paul, Theodoret cites Jesus’ saying, “destroy this temple, and in three days I shall raise it up”.<sup>257</sup> By saying this, Jesus pronounced that he himself, after the previous events, would raise his body from the dead. In Paul’s saying, the one who makes alive is God. However, Theodoret does not see any dissonance between the sayings of Paul and Jesus, for he says that the Scriptures always address same divine acts to all persons of the Trinity. Father and Son, as well as God and the Only Begotten, are fully interchangeable subjects for the divine acts. In light of Theodoret’s Trinitarian unity, it is natural to conclude that the whole Trinity was present in every event in which the Ruler Christ was present. Still, there was no subjecting against the divine nature. On the contrary, according to the divine plan, God executed his eternal love throughout the incarnation.<sup>258</sup> God was not affected, but rather it was God who was the affecting one, according to his divine plan.

According to the divine plan, God reveals himself in history. Paul writes in I Timothy 3.17, “God was revealed in the flesh”. Theodoret explains that, God being God and the Son of God and being invisible by nature, needed the form of man to manifest himself to everyone. Theodoret also presents here a clear formulation of the *two natures of Christ* conception. When Paul writes that the divine nature was revealed in the flesh, he states: “Justified in Spirit”. This means that, having taken on

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<sup>257</sup> John 2:19

<sup>258</sup> “Τὰ γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ Υἱοῦ γινόμενα τῷ Πατρὶ πολλάκις προσαρμόζει ἡ θεία Γραφή. “, *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 456. Trans. Hill, 296-297.

human nature, Christ kept it free from sin. According to Theodoret, this saying also holds the meaning that the Ruler Christ worked through the Holy Spirit as well. Christ revealed God through the miracles that he did through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the centurion, when he saw the earth shaken and the sudden darkness, confessed that Jesus was the Son of God. When people saw the angels, they did not see the invisible nature of divinity, but they did see it in flesh.<sup>259</sup>

The real presence of the divine nature in human lives was not possible until the incarnation. Theodoret analyses this in his comments on the Letter to the Hebrews. He defends Christ's real humanity but does not give up Christ's divine rulership. The Letter to Hebrews begins: "In many various ways, God spoke in olden times to the inspired authors, and in these last days, he spoke to us in a Son". Theodoret explains that Paul is talking of the whole Ruler Christ (ὁ Δεσποτης Χριστος), even though he called him here only the Son. To have a correct historical approach to Paul's text, Theodoret first cites the parable of the vineyard from Luke 20:9-19. In the parable, the master has rented his property to wicked farmers. When the master wanted to receive his payment, he first sent his slaves to the farmers. After they are murdered, the master sent his son to fetch the payment, and, consequently, the son was killed. Theodoret describes the Ruler Christ to have been the one who God sent to the world at last after the slaves. Theodoret interprets that the slaves were the Biblical men, such as the prophets and leaders of the promised land, the inspired authors, to whom God had appeared in different kinds of visions. Theodoret names them as Abraham, Moses, Elijah and Micaiah. In addition, he says that Isaiah, Daniel and Ezekiel saw God in different guises. Now, he asserts that the position of these first men were as types of the last one, the archetype, the Ruler Christ. In their visions, even though they saw the presence of the divine nature, the presence was only apparent. The divine nature cannot be multiform (πολυμορφος), but it is without shape or appearance. Consequently, it was not the incomprehensible nature of God that these men actually saw.<sup>260</sup>

The phrase, *in many ways*, of course, implies something else as well, that each of the inspired authors were entrusted with some particular dispensation, where as their God – I mean Christ the Lord – did not

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<sup>259</sup> "Τὴν γὰρ ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀνειληφὼς, ἐλευθέραν ταύτην ἁμαρτημάτων ἐφύλαξεν.", *Ad I Tim.*, PG 82, 809-812. Trans. Hill, 220-221.

<sup>260</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 677. Trans. Hill, 137-138.



provide for some single need, but by becoming man he set all to rights and secured the salvation of human beings. It became obvious, of course, that there is one lawgiver of old and new.<sup>261</sup>

The Ruler Christ came to the world as the Son of God, and Divinity was present in him and he suffered and died. The holy men before him had the same purpose to make men obedient to God's will, for lawgiver is the same in the Old and the New. In the Ruler Christ, God is seen by men, not straight in divinity but in the person using his human appearance.<sup>262</sup>

Theodoret reinforces his view by stressing the Trinitarian unity. He finds *the true doctrines of God* in the sayings that confirm and describe the Trinitarian unity. As presented in the previous chapter concerning the unity, Theodoret comments on Hebrews with the principle that Father and the Son are absolutely co-eternal. The Son is like *the effulgence of the glory* of Father. It is impossible for effulgence and glory to exist separately, and accordingly the simultaneity of the Father and the Son is absolute. Consequently, he asserts that the unity of the Father and the Son is unbreakable and that their oneness remains. The Son reveals the Father in himself and procured our salvation when becoming a man. Paul writes, "having of himself achieved purification of our sins; he took his seat at the right hand of the majesty on high".<sup>263</sup> According to Theodoret, exaltation took place in human fashion. Though being in honour of God, the Lord humbled himself, and as God, he became man. In Theodoret's expressions, the *kenosis* of Christ the Lord was substantial and not apparent, yet the divinity was not harmed in any way either in its eternality or in its unity with God. As God, he was always the Lord of all, and as a man, when taking the glory to himself, he took what he already had as God. This kind of deification is possible to define as the *communicatio idiomatum*. If the divine nature already had the glory in Christ, the one who took on the glory was human nature. The property of glory and effulgence was shared in the person of Christ the Lord. Theodoret also refers to the prayer of the Lord in Gospels, "Father, glorify me with the glory I had with you before the world came to be".<sup>264</sup> The Lord, in his humanity, prayed by glorifying himself, which he already had in his divinity. Theodoret makes the clear

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<sup>261</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 677-680. Trans. Hill, 137-139. See also the note 209.

<sup>262</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 677-680. Trans. Hill, 138-139.

<sup>263</sup> Heb. 1:3.

<sup>264</sup> John 17:5

difference between owing and revealing. The prayer did not concern the owing but revealing of glory. With this specification of *not owing but revealing*, Theodoret skillfully refutes the heretic conception of *two persons in Christ*. Christ the Lord already owned everything, and there was not any other subject in him that could become the owner of the glory. The process of glorifying was the process of revealing the glory.<sup>265</sup>

Theodoret's doctrine of Trinitarian unity dominates his interpretation of the divine presence in human life. The whole Trinity, including Christ, cannot be involved in human experiences, which would necessitate the subordination of any of the Trinitarian persons. Not even in his human nature would Christ be able to submit. The subjection would violate divine immutability. Theodoret does not endanger the purity of the Nicaean concept of equality between the Father and the Son. Consequently, he even prefers to give up the literal interpretation of the biblical text. He is not ready to say that the Ruler Christ could, in his divinity, be subjected to God the Father. The Holy Spirit is equal in power to the Son. All miracles of Christ are executed through the Holy Spirit. The trinitarian God used humanity as the tool to indicate eternal love. However, there cannot be a separation of natures in Christ. There is a dissonance in Theodoret's expressions of the position of humanity in Christ. On the one hand, according "Christology above" and Alexandrian monophysitism, he says that even the human nature of Christ is not capable of submission so as not to jeopardise the Trinitarian unity. On the other hand, according to Antiochian duophysitism, he says, "if something is to be subjected, it must be the human nature". The dissonance is solved mainly by using the title "Ruler Christ" as the real subject of the expression, without separating the natures to make only one of them the subject.

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<sup>265</sup> "Εὐαγγελίοις ἔφη· «Πάτερ, δόξασόν με τῇ δόξῃ, ἣ εἶχον, πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι, παρὰ σοί. Καὶ ᾗτησεν οὐ λαβεῖν ἅπερ οὐκ εἶχεν, ἀλλ' ἅπερ εἶχε δειχθῆναι. ", *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 634. Trans. Hill, 141.

## 4. THEODORET'S DOCTRINE OF "TWO NATURE" CHRISTOLOGY

### 4.1. From a Categorical Separation of Christ's Natures in the early work of *De Incarnatione* to the Categorical Union in the Ruler Christ in the Commentary on Pauline Letters.

An analysis of Theodoret's understanding of God's impassibility in the second person of the Trinity necessitates a clear picture of Theodoret's Christology. I will first look at his early Christological presentation, mainly according to Pásztori-Kupân's presentation in his work "*Theodoret of Cyrus's Double Treatise. On the Trinity and On the Incarnation: The Antiochene Pathway to Chalcedon*".

Theodoret presented his early Christological doctrine in his treatise *De Incarnatione*. He structured his presentation by proceeding with the Antiochian *Λογος-ανθρωπος* model of Christology, according to which the Logos assumed the 'perfect man' with its soul and body. After the assumption, there are two perfect natures (*δυο φύσεις*) in Christ. The competing school of Alexandria only accepted one Divine subject in Christ, which they asserted in their *Λογος-σαρξ* definition. According my study, it is obvious that the structure and the style of Theodoret's Christological writings changed from the time of *De Incarnatione*. This change was partly due to the context of the current Christological debate. Theodoret was always willing to unite the different schools of the church together.<sup>266</sup> However, it is necessary to take his original presentation of Christology as a starting point of the analysis as a point of comparison for his later conception at the time of the commentary on Pauline Letters.

The strong basis of Theodoret's Christology is the salvation history that originated from God's divine plan (*ἡ οἰκονόμια*). Through and through, Theodoret presented this doctrine as a derivation of God's philanthropy.<sup>267</sup> God's attempt to give men

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<sup>266</sup> Grillmeier 1975, 426.

<sup>267</sup> "Ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ τῶν θείων εὐεργεσιῶν τὸ μέγεθος ὑφάπτειν οἶδε μειζόνως τῶν φιλοθέων τὸν πόθον, καὶ θερμότερους αὐτοὺς καθίστησιν ἐραστὰς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀναγκαίως καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦτον βαδιοῦμαι τὸν λόγον, τῇ θεολογίᾳ τὴν οἰκονομίαν συνάπτων, καὶ δεικνὺς ἡλίκα καὶ ὅσα ὁ Ποιητὴς τὸ ἡμέτερον εὐηργέτησε γένος. Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαύσαντο πώποτε τῶν θείων δωρεῶν αἱ πηγαὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἀναβλύζουσαι",

"I therefore necessarily commence this work, by connecting theology with oikonomia, and showing how greatly the Creator looked after our kind, because the fountainheads of divine gifts never cease to pour their benefits upon the people.", SC, *L'Incarnation*, 12, *Incarnation*, PG 75,

good things and to form a relationship with them was the real reason of Christ's inhumanation. In the very beginning, God created the world to be harmonious, and He appointed man to rule over it. Men were created as rational beings with immortal and spiritual souls. The first man was called "Adam", which in Hebrew means "earth". The purpose of this appellation, with the obvious reference to man's provenance from dust, was intended to remind man of his origin. The knowledge of one's origin should produce essential knowledge about one's substance as a human and should encourage the worship of God. Theodoret sees the very purpose of God's use of Adam's rib as the material for creating woman to be to form a basis for benevolence between people. God wanted to place the bond of concord into human nature. Human nature is considered to be such an unbreakable entity while simultaneously having the skill to live in close union with other types of natures. It was also the purpose of the Law to teach man to recognize his Creator. Man would see the same pattern in the position of earthly rulers in the world and in God's position as ruler over all men. In the description of the fall, Theodoret does not bring out God's anger and judgement. On the contrary, he contends that God has his emotions under control and practices his philanthropy even with punishment: "The Judge mixed the punishment with such philanthropy" (*Τοσαύτη φιλανθρωπία τὴν τιμωρίαν ἐκέρασεν ὁ κριτής!*). First, God wanted to cure the illness of sin by expelling man from paradise. Second, God completely cut all paths and results of the sin with death. Using these forms of punishment, God partly succeeded in his aim to cure mankind since there were few people at the time before the inhumanation of Christ, who received the cure of the illness of sin. In order to help the rest of mankind, "the great and ineffable mystery of the *oikonomia*" finally takes place.<sup>268</sup>

Theodoret presents clear Antiochian two-nature Christology in his description of the process of incarnation. The Word of God, the Second Person of God, was the acting subject at first. He worked in his person in his divine nature, assuming human nature.

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1420. B-C. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 138. In his work "On Divine Providence", Theodoret emphasises God's goodness and emotional love, and the proof of these properties is "the incarnation of our Saviour". *Divine Prov.*, 139. Trans. Thomas Halton.

<sup>268</sup> "ἀλλὰ μίαν τῶν πλευρῶν ἐκείνου λαβὼν, καὶ ταύτῃ καθάπερ τινὶ κρητῖδι καὶ θεμελίῳ χρησάμενος, τὴν γυναικεῖαν φύσιν ποιεῖ· οὐχ ὕλης ἀπορία· μόνη γὰρ αὐτῷ βουλὴ πρὸς τὴν ὅλων δημιουργίαν ἤρκεσεν· ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει τῆς ὁμοιοῦς θελήσας ἐνθεῖναι τὸν σύνδεσμον. ", *SC, L'Incarnation*, 10-28, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1419-1425. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 138-142. See also Theodoret's interpretation on Genesis about the sin and the punishment. *On Oct. I*, 85.

He “assumes human nature and recreates his own image which was corrupted by sin”. In the inhumanation, Theodoret does not define any changes concerning divine nature. On the level of substances, he comes near to the Alexandrian conception when defining the process. Divine nature dominates the whole inhumanation. The divine nature remains immutable with all his divine properties in the process. It was in the form of God remaining exactly what he was before.<sup>269</sup> Accordingly, human nature, while being mutable, also preserved its full humanity.<sup>270</sup> These definitions in his early works refute all possibilities of confusing mixture; the two natures of Christ are totally different according to their properties and operations. Theodoret also refutes separation: the natures are united only in the person (*προσωπον*) of Christ. Elsewhere Theodoret describe the union according to the Logos (*Ἀπόδειξις ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς τῆς τῶν φύσεων διακρίσεως, καὶ τῆς τοῦ Λόγου ἐνώσεως*<sup>271</sup>). In the person of Christ there are changes, however, that exclusively concern human nature. All expressions of “to become” must to be attributed to the human nature while the expressions of “to be” to the divine nature.<sup>272</sup>

In spite of the clear difference between the human and divine properties in Christ, Theodoret explicitly refutes the possibility of two different persons. He states that the church does not divide the *oikonomia* into two persons (*προσωπα δυο*), nor does it preach or teach two sons instead of the Only-begotten. It is the one subject of Christ’s person which deserves all worship. Theodoret applies the principle of Biblical naming in order to avoid a dissonance of sayings and to attribute both divine and human operations to Christ’s person. In Isaiah (Isa.7:14), Christ was named ‘Emmanuel’, which, according to the Gospels, is interpreted: ‘God with us’. By simply referring to this single appellation, Theodoret considered Christ to be both God and man simultaneously. He sees that the passages where either inhuman divine properties or human properties, referring to human weakness, are brought out are not only indicators of the different natures but also indicators of one person that

<sup>269</sup> “τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀναλαμβάνει, καὶ τὴν οἰκείαν εἰκόνα νεοποιεῖ τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ διαφθαρεῖσαν”, *SC, L’Incarnation*, 22-28, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1425-1426. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 141-142.

<sup>270</sup> It was only in the resurrection when the divination concerned Christ’s human nature.

<sup>271</sup> *SC, L’Incarnation*, 102, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1456.

<sup>272</sup> “Ἐναντίον δὲ τοῦ γενέσθαι, τὸ εἶναι· ὁ γὰρ ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, οὐ γίνεται κρείττων ἀγγέλων, ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἀγγέλων οὐ κρείττων μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ποιητῆς, καὶ Δεσπότης”, *SC, L’Incarnation*, 96-111, 150-154, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1455-1457, 1474. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 158-159, 168.

possesses two types of properties. Christ can be seen as both human and divine i.e. passible and impassible in that person.<sup>273</sup>

Theodoret emphasises that it is not correct, after the inhumanation, to call Christ (*ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός*) only either the “God-Word” or the “man” without the Godhead. The correct appellation is simply “the Christ”, which includes both natures. In the Christ, there are both the one assuming and the one assumed. In the person, it was the Christ himself who fully received our passions, all except sin (*πάντως τὰ ἡμέτερα πλὴν τῆς ἁμαρτίας καταδέχεται πάθη*). The person of Christ, in a human way, was circumcised according to the Law, fed milk and nursed, and he was afraid of Archelaus. In a human way, he also hungered and was tempted. On the other hand, as the entire person, in a divine way, he receives worship and is called the Saviour and Ruler simultaneously.<sup>274</sup> Theodoret could also summarise, under the one name of the Lord Christ, the whole life of Christ: ‘Thus was the Lord Christ born, thus was he nurtured, worked miracles, suffered, was crucified, died, sent out his holy disciples as messengers to all humankind and was taken up into heaven.’<sup>275</sup>

Theodoret finds it natural, as part of the practice of the “communication of names”, to attribute the human experiences to the human nature and the divine ones to the divine nature, although this at first seems to necessitate two different subjects. He relies on the notion of the part to represent the whole. Again, Theodoret reflects Alexandrian structure by saying that it was in the end “the God Word”, the divine nature alone, that was the active subject of both assuming humanity and performing divine acts.<sup>276</sup> Still, he continues according to the Antiochian pattern: human nature was the active subject of human acts. Theodoret refers to the creation by saying that there was a difference between that “which came into existence” and that “which existed”. The form of God is different from the form of man. Concerning

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<sup>273</sup> “Σαφέστερον δ’ ἂν τις ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν κατίδοι, ταῖς ἐνεργείαις μὲν διηρημένας, τῷ προσώπῳ δὲ συνημμένας, καὶ τὸν ἓνα ὑποδεικνύσας Υἱόν.”, SC, *L’Incarnation*, 96-102, 112-118, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1453, 1455, 1460. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 158-159.

<sup>274</sup> SC, *L’Incarnation* 118-128, 144-148, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1461, 1464, 1472. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 162-167.

<sup>275</sup> “Οὕτω γεννηθεὶς ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός, οὕτω τραφεὶς, οὕτω θαυματουργήσας, διὰ ταῦτα παθὼν, σταυρωθεὶς, ἀποθανὼν, κήρυκας ἀποστείλας πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις τοὺς ἱεροὺς μαθητὰς, εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν” SC, *L’Incarnation* 138-144, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1469-1470. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 167.

<sup>276</sup> Cyrill of Alexandria explains that “the Subject of the life of Jesus is the Word, who has emptied himself to accommodate himself to human life”. Russel Norman 2000, 43.

Theodoret's conception of God's impassibility, it is important to note his clear distinction: "The destroyed temple is different from the God who raised it up".<sup>277</sup>

Theodoret was careful to preserve the difference of properties between the divine and the human natures. He prefers to define every property according to its own nature, simply in its original form. Accordingly, he denies the possibility that, after the assumption, the properties would have been mixed in any way. He says that man ought not to teach a mixture (*κρᾶσις*) between the nature that itself was the Creator and between the nature that was the creature of the Creator. According to Theodoret, his definition would not cause any difficulties for the common worship of the One Son. It is the name Christ that includes the forms of the servant and his Lord. The communication of names indicates a substantial union that did not exist before the union (*ἔνωσις*). The servant, if deprived from the Godhead, would never be called by that name. The common name seals the union.<sup>278</sup>

Concerning God's impassibility, it is important to note that Theodoret does not accept any mixing of the properties between the natures. This definition refutes all possibilities of suffering on the part of the impassible divine nature in its union with the passible human nature. Theodoret emphasises that God always remains the same in his nature and that man always remains the same in his nature. He says that those who teach a mixture if these natures introduce the danger of confusion. He intends to refute even the slightest confusion since confusion would necessarily lead to a change (*τροπή*) in the nature, which would lead to the interpretation of the passibility of the divine nature. Confusion would force the natures to leave the limits of their essence. If the limits of essence were breached, God would not be recognised as God, and man would not be recognised as man.<sup>279</sup>

Theodoret demonstrates the concept of *ἔνωσις* (a union) by comparing it to the structure of a human being. It would not be proper to say that the soul is mixed

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<sup>277</sup> "ἕτερον ὁ λυθείς ναὸς, καὶ ἕτερον ὁ λυθέντα τοῦτον ἀναστήσας Θεός." SC, *L'Incarnation*, 144-149, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1472. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 168-169

<sup>278</sup> "Τὰτα τοίνυν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκονομίας τὴν εἰκόνα λαβόντες, τῆς βλασφημίας ἀπαλλαγῶμεν κείνης, καὶ τὴν κρᾶσιν βλασφημίας ἀπαλλαγῶμεν ἐκείνης, καὶ τὴν κρᾶσιν καταλιπόντες, τῇ τῆς ἐνώσεως καὶ συναφείας καὶ κοινωνίας ὀνόματι χρώμενοι διατελέσωμεν φύσεων μὲν [*cod. φύσεως*] διάκρισιν, προσώπου δὲ ἔνωσιν δογματίζοντες." SC, *L'Incarnation*, 144-154, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1472-1473. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 169

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

(κεκρᾶσθαι) with the body, but rather that it is united (ἡνωσθαι) and conjoined (συνῆφθαι) with the body. It would be proper to express that the soul dwells (οικεῖ) in and works inside (ἐνεργεῖ) the body. The mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul never change. The soul and the body own their special natures, and the essence of these universal natures does not change. There is no problem in confessing their difference, for everyone is still able to acknowledge one human being, who is composed of these two. Each nature is named separately, as a soul and as a body, and the composite of these is called a man.<sup>280</sup>

Theodoret concludes:

“Therefore, taking this also as an image of the *oikonomia*, let us avoid that blasphemy (i.e. the confusion of natures), and abandoning ‘mixture’, let us apply consistently the terms of ‘union’ (ἔνωσις), conjunction’ (συναφεία) and ‘togetherness’ (κοινωνία), teaching the distinction (διάκρισις) of nature, and the unity of the person.”<sup>281</sup>

In his early work of *De Incarnatione*, Theodoret strongly stresses the two different natures of Christ. His main axiom seems to be that he defends divine immutability. In addition, he settled the basis for understanding the unity in Christ by using Christ’s person as the only subject of both the human and divine acts of Christ. However, the subjectivity of two different natures prevails.

In his Commentary on the Pauline letters, Theodoret was moved to emphasise the unity of Christ. He does not bring out the duality of Christ as eagerly as he did before. Theodoret avoids using explicit expressions of Christ assuming not only the body, but also the perfect soul (οὐ σάρκα μόνην, ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχὴν ἀνειληφέναι τὸν Θεὸν λόγον ὡμολογήσαμεν).<sup>282</sup> He has taken a distance from his two-partite conception of two, almost independent, natures with their two kinds of properties in Christ. He still asserts divine immutability and impassibility while affirming the human mutability and passibility in Christ’s person. When presenting his interpretation of Biblical sayings, he meets the problem deriving from his dualistic *Λογος-ανθρωπος* Christology. Without making any dualistic divisions, the Bible attributes two kinds of properties and experiences, including passible ones, to one

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> *SC, L’Incarnation, 144-154, Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1472-1473. Trans. in Páztztori-Kupán 2006, 169.

<sup>282</sup> *II Eranistes*, 256.



Christological subject, the Christ. However, the dissonance between “one subject expressions” with “two subject thinking” is not so interfering as in Theodoret’s earlier works, since Theodoret has begun to emphasise systematically the unity in Christ’s person. He is ready to attribute all attributes and experiences mentioned in the Bible to the person of Christ. At the same time, if he sees it necessary, he analyses the attributes and allocates them to the proper natures. Simultaneously, according to the communication of names that, on the one hand, the parts represent the whole and, on the other hand, there are always all kinds of parts included in the whole, no matter whether they are mentioned or not. In the unity of the person of Christ, there are two types of natures present all the time, although they do not seem to work according to their very properties.

Theodoret comes to important conclusions when interpreting Heb. 13:8, “Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, and for eternity the same.” He asks about the real subject of the sentence: “Who is ‘this same?’” The answer, which he gives, is formulated: “It is the “Only-begotten Son” who is also the “First-born” that is ‘the same’”. Theodoret attributes this sameness and the role of subject to the person of Christ, while adding two different names to Christ by which he refers to two different natures. He does not necessitate two subjects, but he analyses the very essence of this one subject, indicating the presence of two different natures.<sup>283</sup>

He continues to explain that there is “the one” and “the other”, which together belong to the sameness. While belonging to the sameness, they represent the sameness in different ways. It is only the first one i.e. the divine nature, which is capable of representing eternity, and it is only the human nature that is capable of representing the limitations of time. However, the whole saying is possible to address directly to the person, but only partially to the different natures of Christ. Theodoret’s prime concern is that it would be wrong to attribute any limitations of time to the divine nature since it is impossible to offend its unlimited eternity, impassibility and immutability. Theodoret’s solution derives from his interpretation

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<sup>283</sup> “Χθὲς γὰρ καὶ σήμερον τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν ἐκάλεσε φύσιν· αἰώνιον δὲ τὴν θεότητα προσηγόρευσε. Τὸν δὲ αὐτὸν ἔφη καὶ τοῦτο εἶναι κάκεῖνο, ἐπειδὴ εἰς Υἱὸς μονογενὴς ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ πρωτότοκος.” *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 781. Trans. Hill, 194.

of Heb 13:8, that *communicatio idiomatum* takes place in the person of Christ but not directly between the natures of Christ. The past and the present are written to concern human nature, and similarly eternity is written only to concern divine nature. According to Theodoret's exegetical practise of communication of names and communication of properties, it is quite logical to formulate the division of natures through expressions of different names and at the same time gather the parts together in a common name, so that all attributes belong to the one name of the whole person of Christ. Similarly, it is not necessary to think that there is dissonance in stating that the person of Christ suffers and the divinity of Christ preserves its impassibility. The passible attributes are realised through the human nature. The person of Christ died and was dead for three days. However, it would be wrong to attribute these three days of death to Christ's divine nature. This is because the divine nature cannot lose any period of time of its eternity. There would be no eternity if it lacked three days. Even though Christ was a person that was fixed to the cross by Jews and that lived a human life in history, the divine nature was not limited nor did it suffer in any way. It is possible for Theodoret to take Paul's words as literally true concerning the person of Christ since Theodoret attributes all limitations of time and passible experiences to Christ's human nature.<sup>284</sup> Here, Theodoret takes the important step towards the Chalcedonian concept. He started with the Antiochian conception, by confessing the universal φύσεις of human man and divine God. Their attributes he located in their individual ὑποστάσεις of Christ's two natures. However, he, in his commentary on the Pauline letter, does not fully apply original Antiochian terminology in which the ὑποστάσις forms the basis for its universal φύσις and individual countenance, the πρόσωπον, all three of which were always linked together. The πρόσωπον can now be seen as the common and uniting person of the two different natures. By naming one common subject for two natures, Theodoret takes an important step in going towards the Chalcedonian definition of one person with two natures.

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<sup>284</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 688, 781. Trans. Hill, 144, 194.

#### 4.2. Divine Authority in Christ According to Divine Love as Presented in the Commentary on the Pauline Letters

In his Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul, Theodoret does not abandon the “two-nature Christology” of his earlier works, such as *De Incarnatione*. However, he does stress the authority of Christ’s person over Christ’s two natures. He also does not use very polemical expressions against Alexandrian thinking. This change in his use of expressions seems to be due to his practical work on God’s divine plan and its fulfillment and due to his aim to avoid tension in polemical discussions involving Christological expressions.

Christology is here again interwoven into Salvation history, which is God’s *οἰκονομία*. His presentation on Salvation history is important because the attitude of God towards human beings is also at work in Christ between his two natures. Theodoret makes much room for new patterns of expressions in taking emotional standpoints in addition to rational ones. He describes the relationship between God and man variously with these two kinds of expressions. On the one hand, the relationship is very rational. By reason, man has the knowledge of good and evil and is able to know God. The purpose of the Law is to teach men, and, after they have learned, they have the free will to make their choices.<sup>285</sup> If man has received the right teaching, all passions of the body are guided by the soul in a fit and proper manner. In this respect, Theodoret gives the impression that reason must powerfully prevail over all emotions.<sup>286</sup> On the other hand, the relationship between God and man is also pictured as emotional. Theodoret asserts, following Paul, that love is more powerful than knowledge, and he encourages men to love God, who cares and practices providence. Also, God’s attitude in arranging salvation was not purely rational. He did not carry it out in power, nor did he overthrow death’s influence by his cold command and direction. On the contrary, he “tempered justice with loving mercy”.<sup>287</sup> Consequently, everyone should have the ardent affection for the Ruler

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<sup>285</sup> “Τὸν Ἀδὰμ ὁ Δεσπότης δημιουργήσας Θεός, καὶ λόγῳ τιμήσας, μίαν δέδωκεν ἐντολὴν εἰς γυμνασίαν τοῦ λογικοῦ. Οὐδὲ γὰρ οἶόν τε ἦν τὸν λόγον μετεληφῶτα, καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν διάγνωσιν ἔχοντα, νόμου τινὸς χωρὶς πολιτεύεσθαι.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 100. Trans Hill, Theodoret 2001c, 72.

<sup>286</sup> “Ἐδειξεν οὐ πονηρὸν τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλ’ ἀγαθοῦ Θεοῦ δημιούργημα. Δύναται γὰρ, εἴ καὶ καλῶς ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κυβερνοῦμενον, τῷ Θεῷ λειτουργεῖν.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 108-109. Trans. Hill, Theodoret 2001c, 77.

<sup>287</sup> “Οὐ γὰρ ἐξουσία τὴν ἡμετέραν ὥκονόμησε σωτηρίαν, οὐδὲ προστάγματι καὶ λόγῳ κατέλυσε τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κράτος, ἀλλ’ ἐκέρασε τῷ δικαίῳ τὸν ἔλεον.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 60. *Ad Rom.*, PG 82,

Christ (ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός). Theodoret emphasises the emotional involvement by arguing that, without the right affection, it would be better for a member of the church to be excommunicated. All members of the Church have to love God and be prepared to share that love with each other. Theodoret claims that Paul's apostolic aim was to make all people fellow lovers of God. If this apostolic goal were to be reached, all people would love the loving God (καὶ τὸν ἀγαπήσαντα Δεσπότην φιλήσωμεν)<sup>288</sup>. By this emotional orientation, Theodoret has given himself much more space for Christological expressions concerning divine presence in human life.

Being in the affection of divine love guides people most effectively to a right understanding of God's will and to proper behaviour towards each other. Theodoret especially counts on the power of Biblical presentation when appealing to lessen tensions between the different points of view. He derives the concept of the overwhelming of divine love from 1 Cor 8., where Paul teaches about the misuse of the food sacrificed to idols. He first describes the backgrounds of this teaching. Some people in Corinth, perhaps the believers, had taken part in meals that were sacrificed to idols at the temples. These partakers had honestly thought that God had made everything and that, accordingly, there is no idol food. Consequently, they thought that they were allowed to eat everything without exception. The partakers, however, had done wrong in eating since they offended some other believing people. With their inconsiderate deed, the eaters of idolatrous meat had encouraged others without the same knowledge and with bad conscience to take part in the meals. Theodoret comes to the conclusion: knowledge and doctrine alone are not enough. Everyone must be suspicious of his own knowledge. As a matter of fact, knowledge may be deceiving. Paul asserted: "*If anyone thinks they know something, they do not yet know anything they ought to know*",<sup>289</sup> and before that: "*Knowledge puffs up, whereas love builds up*".<sup>290</sup> Theodoret explains that people pride themselves with

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285-287. Trans. Hill, 50, Hill, 190-191.

<sup>288</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 373. Trans. Hill, 237-238. Theodoret expresses his concept of love in accordance with Clement of Alexandria. Clement also suggested the process of love comes from God, towards whom man is wholly turned. He writes in *Stromata*: "He always loves God towards whom alone he is wholly turned, and, because of this, he hates none of God's creatures, and he does not strive after anything, for nothing is lacking for his assimilation to Him who is good and beautiful. He does not love anything with an ordinary love (philia), but loves (agapa) the creator through creatures." *Stromata*. 6.9. (71, 4-5).

<sup>289</sup> I Cor. 8:2., *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 285. Trans. Hill, 189-190

<sup>290</sup> I Cor. 8:1.

knowledge when using knowledge wrong. Love is more powerful than knowledge, and it takes care of the welfare of the weaker members.<sup>291</sup>

Love also leads to the reception of God's grace, as Paul writes, "*but, if anyone loves God, he is known by him*".<sup>292</sup> Theodoret asserts that man needs and has much knowledge in this life, but that knowledge always remains imperfect. Accordingly, Theodoret gives the exhortation to love (*ἀγάπησῶμεν*) God above all else in order to enjoy his providence (*προμηθεΐας*). According to Theodoret, it is important to note that Paul did not say: but if anyone loves God, "he knows" (*ἔγνω αὐτόν*) God, but rather: "he is known" (*ἀλλ' ἔγνωσται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ*) by God. The expression that "he is known by God" means the same as "to enjoy God's providence". Theodoret does not give up divine authority in the communication between God and human beings. Theodoret sees the same truth expressed in the words of Moses when he talked to God: "You told me, You found grace with me, and I know you beyond all others".<sup>293</sup> In this way, the impassible God gives his loving answer to human love.<sup>294</sup> Through this interpretation, Theodoret also intends to sustain God's extreme transcendence and his role as the only possible subject when revealing his love and care. Theodoret implicitly confirms the reality of God's feelings and his capability of having human passible affections by saying that they who lack life and soul (being *ἄψυχα*) and the capability of feeling (*ἀναίσθητα*) are idols.<sup>295</sup> Expressed in the opposite manner, the relationship with the real God is not without emotions since the one who loves God loves the God who loves him (*καὶ τὸν ἀγαπήσαντα Δεσπότην φιλήσωμεν*).<sup>296</sup>

Emotional capabilities essentially belong to the properties of Christ. According to Theodoret's Christological structure, there must be a capable soul for emotions and for ruling over the body in Christ. To be polite to his opponents, he formulates his expressions the whole person of Christ as the subject. He says that the Ruler Christ in person is the perfect man (*ὁ ἀνθρώπος*) and that, at the same time, he is the

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<sup>291</sup> "Ἡ γνῶσις φυσιοῦ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ. Κρείττων ἡ ἀγάπη τῆς γνώσεως.", *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 285. Trans. Hill, 189-190.

<sup>292</sup> I Cor. 8:1. "Εἰ δέ τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Θεόν, οὗτος ἔγνωσται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, Πολλῆς ἡμῖν δεῖ γνώσεως, καὶ ταύτην λαβεῖν τελείαν κατὰ τὸν παρόντα βίον τῶν ἀδυνάτων. Ἀγαπήσωμεν τοίνυν τὸν Θεόν, ἵνα τῆς αὐτοῦ τύχωμεν προμηθείας", *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 288. Trans. Hill, 191.

<sup>293</sup> Exod. 33:12.

<sup>294</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 288. Trans. Hill, 191.

<sup>295</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 288. Trans. Hill, 191.

<sup>296</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 373. Trans. Hill, 237-238

incarnated Logos of God (ὁ ἐνάνθρωπης Θεὸς Λόγος).<sup>297</sup> Through the personal unity of Christ, Theodoret opens the way to attribute both the human and the divine emotions to the very same subject. Still, he focuses on divine emotions for their importance in *Oikonomia*.

Eternal love for humankind and for the human nature of Christ remains in the divine nature of Christ eternally. The divine love is the original source of *Oikonomia*. The knowledge of all and the eternal love have motivated God to create the divine plan for man's salvation. The plan necessitated a victim and suffering. No doubt, Christ, in his divine nature, was willing and able to love and have compassion for men. However, it was not possible for the impassible divinity to execute the plan of suffering and sacrifice in its own οὐσία. It was necessary to have another nature, the human nature, to execute the missing capability in *Oikonomia*. There is no doubt that the divine authority prevails in Theodoret's Christology, but how to define the real subject was difficult for Theodoret to grasp. He wanted to keep his Antiochian two-nature structure and not take the Alexandrian standpoint of monophysitism. The solution in his Commentary on the Pauline letters is to stress the subject nature of the person of Christ by calling him "*Ruler Christ*" (ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός) and by attributing more human emotions to the Divine.

#### **4.3. Impassible Divine Nature in the Birth of "the First-Born"**

Theodoret builds his doctrine of incarnation on his doctrine of the Trinity. Trinitarian impassibility prevails in incarnation. In his presentation in *De Incarnatione*, the cornerstone of his argument is the notion that the divine nature must be, in all persons of the Trinity, equally co-eternal, co-immutable and co-impassible. Christ, in his person, had only one immutable nature, that of the divine, being eternal, immutable and impassible in pre-existence. When compared to human limitations of time, there was not a time when the immutable Son was not the immutable Son. However, in eternity, he was begotten from the Father. To understand Theodoret's concept of divine begetting provides a good basis for understanding his doctrine of incarnation. Theodoret describes divine begetting as the Son being born "timelessly

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<sup>297</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49D. Trans. Hill, 45.

and impassibly” from the Father. He starts by first describing the impassible begetting as excluding all pictures of human birth with its painful events. He argues that nobody should think about the suffering of human birth with weaning, the flow of blood in labouring or anything like that, since they all belong to the passions of human bodies. To support his view, he calls on his conception of God’s eternal wisdom, in which God is capable of including in himself, beforehand, passional events and to allow them to flow out impassionably in right time. Theodoreth also appeals to his conception of the Biblical communication of names, according to which it is possible to create new reality by naming.<sup>298</sup>

First, Theodoret contends for his view of impassible begetting in pre-existence by comparing the timeless begetting of Christ to the creation of the world. In the creation, God was incorporeal and impassible. He did not have any change in himself when creating new entities. Everything came out from his mind since it was only his will that was required to create the whole world. By his will, God immediately brought the non-existent into being. Theodoret is sure that we can learn the pattern of Christ’s impassible birth in the pre-existence from the creation. When thinking of the non-material creation, Theodoret believes that all his adversaries should also admit that God’s begetting was free from all suffering. God did not create the way a human being would with sweat and pains. Accordingly, he did not beget in the same human way either.<sup>299</sup>

Second, Theodoret analyses the titles of Christ to support his impassible begetting in eternity. When he applied the communication of names in support of Trinitarian unity, he indicated how the naming and sayings that concerned only one person of the Trinity should be taken as reference to all the three persons equally. The part could completely represent the whole. Now, Theodoret, in his Christology, applies

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<sup>298</sup> “ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ ὧν καὶ ὑπάρχων, κτίσμα προσαγορευῆσαι τὸν ἐκ Πατρὸς μὲν ἀχρόνως καὶ ἀπαθῶς γεννηθέντα, ἐν δὲ τοῖς κόλποις τοῦ Πατρὸς ἰδρυμένον “, *SC La Trinite*, 254-264, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1157, 1160. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 117-118.

<sup>299</sup> “Θεὸς δὲ ἀσώματος, καὶ ἀπαθὴς, ἄτρεπτός τε, καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος, ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχων· εἰ δέ τις οἶεται γέννησιν μὴ εἶναι πάθους ἀπηλλαγμένην, καὶ ἐν τοῖς περὶ κτίσεως λόγοις τούτους δεχέσθω τοὺς λογισμοὺς ... εἰ δὲ μόνη βούλησις τῷ Θεῷ εἰς τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ἡρκεσε δημιουργίαν, καὶ βουληθεὶς παραχρήμα τὰ μὴ ὄντα ἔδειξεν ὄντα, δεξάσθω ὁ ἀντιλέγων καὶ τὴν γέννησιν τοῦ Θεοῦ πάθους ἀπηλλάχθαι παντός. Ὡσπερ δὲ οὐ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως ἐδημιούργησεν, οὕτως οὐτε ὁμοίως ἐγέννησεν. “, *SC La Trinite*, 254, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1157. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 118.

the communication of names also in the opposite manner: “the whole includes the parts”.<sup>300</sup> The same “Christ” means both the “Only-begotten Son” (ὁ Λογος) and the “Firstborn”. The names “Only-begotten” and “Firstborn” derive from different processes concerning the two births of Christ. The “Only-begotten” defines the origin of the divinity of Christ as different from the origin of his human nature, which is called the “Firstborn”. The “Only-begotten” is born without torment, like a word which emerges impassibly from the mind. The “Only-begotten” (ὁ Λογος) is called the Son, as he is the one who proceeds from the Father by this impassible begetting. All that was born in this begetting exclusively concerned the divine nature of Christ. There are also other divine titles that are to be attributed to Christ according to this unique impassible birth. Theodoret lists the names “God”, “the partaker of the Father’s divine nature” and “unchangeable image of the begetting God”. The names mentioned anticipate the impassibility of the divine nature of Christ also with regard to his coming being in human history. The opposite names, which denote something under the limits of humanity, are to be attributed exclusively to the human nature of Christ. The name “Firstborn” always refers to Christ’s being in the stage of humanity among other people, and it is not possible to address it to the divine nature.<sup>301</sup>

The birth of the “Firstborn” took place at the incarnation. This human birth did not concern the divine nature as the object but, on the one hand, as the subject and, on the other, as the one that is ontologically present in the birth. The notion that divine nature had the position of subject in the incarnation does not mean that it was not a real human birth. On the contrary, the divine control accepted the human birth in all its dimensions like joining a human bloodline. Theodoret says that the Ruler Christ was styled (ἐχρημάτισεν) in the bloodline of David for assuming the human nature of

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<sup>300</sup> In ancient rhetoric, this use of words was called synecdoche *συνεδοχή*. It was a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole or the whole for a part, the special for the general or the general for the special. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/synecdoche>.

<sup>301</sup> “Καὶ ἐτέρωθεν ἔλεγεν· «Ὁς μετασχηματίζει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸ σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.» Οὐκοῦν αὐτός ἐστι καὶ πρωτότοκος ὁ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἔχων ἀδελφούς· περὶ ὧν αὐτὸς ἐν Ψαλμοῖς φησιν· «Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου.» Οὐκ ἄλλον δὲ τὸν μονογενῆ, καὶ ἄλλον τὸν πρωτότοκον εἶναί φαμεν, ἀλλὰ τὸν αὐτὸν, οὐ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ δέ. ονογενῆς μὲν γὰρ ὠνόμασται κατὰ τὴν ἄνωθεν γέννησιν, πρωτότοκος δὲ κέκληται ὡς πρῶτος τῆς ἐπὶ τὴν ζωὴν φερούσης γεννήσεως τὰς ὁδοὺς λύσας.”, *SC La Trinite*, 254-264, *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1157, 1160.

Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 118-119.



David's bloodline (*ὥς ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀναλαβών*).<sup>302</sup> The divine nature, as the subject, assumed the human nature into itself. The divine nature, as the Creator of man, has commiserated with the image of man, which was threatened and exposed to death, and the divine nature executed the Oikonomia. Theodoret describes the position of the divine nature as being present but entirely immutable in the process. The divine nature bent down from the place where it was, the heavens, and descended to earth. It was not a change of place or move elsewhere because that would have been impossible. The divine nature is eternally present and fills all things. In his infinite and boundless being, he is able to hold everything in his control. This omnipresence does not cease during his assumption of a human form. Theodoret cites Psalm 95:4 as a proof text, "For in his hands are the margins of the earth". Theodoret explains this metaphor:<sup>303</sup>

Therefore, let us understand the descending (of God) as condescending: so he bent down the heavens, descended and chose the virgin womb of a holy maiden nurtured in piety. He announced the birth by angelic voice, elucidating beforehand the mode of conception, and dispelling virginal fear by explanation. He moved in and prepared himself a temple, formed the intact and pure tent."<sup>304</sup>

The divine nature was completely impassible in the incarnation. However, this does not mean that the divine nature was not present in the human birth all the time. On the contrary, as proof of the presence of divinity, the birth was not a normal human birth. Just as the conception of the child Jesus had been a miracle and Mary had preserved her virginity, Theodoret sees similar affection of divine presence in the birth. The Virgin preserved her virginity since the birth was a great and inexpressible miracle. Theodoret also uses expressions that refer to the impassible birth, including both natures of Christ. He contends that the painful human childbirth was completely passed. Theodoret compares the impassible birth to other kinds of miracles. It was as unreasonable as a bushel of grapes rising from the earth without a vine twig, or wheat growing without a seed or a garment being woven without a thread and

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<sup>302</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49. Trans. Hill, 45.

<sup>303</sup> *SC La Incarnation*, 112-118, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1460. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 161.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.* "Οὐκοῦν τὴν κατάβασιν νοήσωμεν συγκατάβασιν· ἐκλινε τοίνυν οὐρανὸς, καὶ κατέβη, καὶ παρθενικὴν ἐκλεξάμενος νηδὸν κόρης ἁγίας καὶ εὐσεβείας συντετραμμένης, δι' ἀγγελικῆς φωνῆς τὸν τόκον προμηνυσάσης, καὶ τῆς συλλήψεως τὸν τρόπον προερμηνεύσας, καὶ τῆς παρθενίας τὸν φόβον τῇ ἐρμηνείᾳ λυσάσης, εἰσοικίζεται τε, καὶ ναὸν ἑαυτῷ κατασκευάζει, καὶ τὴν ἄσπαρτον, καὶ ἀνήροτον σκηνὴν διαπλάττει."

weaving hands. The bread was baked, yet it did not demand any milling, any handwork or fire. It was baked by virginal flour. In Theodoret's expressions, possible human experiences are attributed to the Virgin Mary. Christ completely assimilated the human nature from the Virgin Mary. She experienced the growth of her womb and, after giving birth, the breastfeeding of the infant. However, these expressions of the birth are not in dissonance with the impassibility of the divine nature in Christ.<sup>305</sup>

In his Commentary on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret does not move away from the cornerstone of Trinitarian immutability, but his expressions are different compared to his former ones. In describing the process of the Incarnation, Theodoret avoids emphasising two kinds of perfect natures of Christ. He formulates his definitions in the form that it was the person, the Ruler Christ, who assumed his partner. In addition, it was necessarily not "the man", but either "the humanity" or "the human nature" that was assumed.<sup>306</sup> He seems to have trouble maintaining the former line after the process of assumption; no matter how carefully he puts his words, there are expressions in his presentation that can be interpreted as if there is a perfect man with a perfect soul in the Ruler Christ.<sup>307</sup> In light of his former conception, it would have been possible to attribute all human actions to Christ's human nature. The easiest way to safeguard God's impassibility would be to claim that there were no affections concerning the divine nature. However, in another vein of Theodoret's interpretation, he clearly presents the notion that even the divine nature is not always immune to emotions and that the presence of the divine nature is constant throughout the whole incarnation.

<sup>305</sup> "Τούτου χάριν ὁ μονογενὴς τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος ἐκ μόνης Παρθένου τὰς ἀφορμὰς λαβὼν τῆς διαπλάσεως, καὶ τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ τὸν ἀγεώργητον δημιουργήσας ναὸν, καὶ ἑαυτῷ συνάψας, πρόεισιν ἐκ τῆς Παρθένου, οὐ λύσας τῇ συλλήψει τὴν παρθενικὴν ζώνην, οὐ τῇ γεννήσει διαρρήξας, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον καὶ ἀνέπαφον διαφυλάξας, καὶ τὸ μέγα τοῦτο καὶ ἄρρητον θαῦμα θαυματουργήσας· μέγα γὰρ τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἀνερμήνευτον, καὶ λόγου δύναντι ὑπερβαῖνον, βότρυν ἰδεῖν ἐκ γῆς ἄνευ κλημάτων βλαστήσαντα", *SC La Incarnation, 112-120, Incarnatione, PG 75, 1460-1461. Trans. Pásztori-Kurán, 161-162.*

<sup>306</sup> "Περὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ κατὰ σάρκα. Διὰ πάντων, φησὶ, τῶν προφητῶν τὰ περὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ προεθέσπισεν· ὃς ἐξ αὐτοῦ φύσει πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων γεγεννημένος, καὶ τοῦ Δαβὶδ υἱὸς ἐχρημάτισεν, ὥς ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀναλαβὼν. Τοῦ μέντοι Δαβὶδ μνημονεύσας, ὅταν ἀναγκαίως τὸ κατὰ σάρκα προστέθεικεν· ἵνα μὴ φύσει μὲν τοῦ Δαβὶδ υἱὸς νομισθῇ, κατὰ χάριν δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ."., *Ad Rom., PG 82, 49. Trans. Hill, 45.*

<sup>307</sup> "Εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν, ὥς ἀνθρώπον ἤγειρεν· ὥς ἄνθρωπος γὰρ καὶ τὸ πάθος ἐδέξατο. "., "...even if it was the Father who raised him, it was *as man* that he raised him, as it was *as man* also that he experienced the passion." *Ad Rom., PG 82, 105. Trans. Hill, 76.*

Clayton sees Theodoret as not wanting to arouse the fury of the Alexandrians and accordingly avoiding expressions that he continually used in his earlier works. Clayton 2007, 181.

Theodoret describes the process of *οἰκονομία* and the incarnation also in accordance to the Alexandrian “Christology from above”. He explains that God imparted *οἰκονομία* systematically down to men from above. God the Father first donated the greatest gift in his Son, Christ the Lord. The person of the Son is one, by which Theodoret means that God donated the whole Son. However, in the person of Christ, it was only the divine nature that donated the human nature of Christ to man. Theodoret describes the donation with Jesus’ words concerning the Holy Communion: “*The bread I shall give... [Theodoret asks to pay special attention to the following words] is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world... I have authority to lay down my life, and I have authority to take it up again*”.<sup>308</sup> Here, Theodoret has taken the word *I* as a synonym for Christ’s divine nature.<sup>309</sup> According to the decisions of the divine nature, Christ experienced the Passion for us, he rose and was seated with the Father. However, the mutable affections are to be attributed to human nature. Theodoret puts it, “rather, putting worth aside, he chose extreme lowliness and took on the human form, taking on the likeness of human beings, and being found to have human appearance. He says this of God the Word that despite being God, he was not seen to be God, being invested in human nature.”<sup>310</sup> The lowliness took place in the human nature. Theodoret continues, “The phrase human appearance (was) therefore befitting him. After all, this was in truth, the nature assumed by him, and while he himself was not that, he was invested in it.”<sup>311</sup>

Theodoret argues that the motive for the divine decisions was divine love, which did not cease at any time, but was in Christ’s divine nature. That the divinity protected the human nature from Evil was, on the one hand, a revelation that he cares for all people in his providence. This deed was only the first fruits of his care to come to all. On the other hand, he assumed that man effects these first fruits in order to give by them evidence to the Father of their blamelessness. Theodoret refers to Paul’s saying

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<sup>308</sup> John. 6:51, 10:18.

<sup>309</sup> “He gave us the greater gift, and will he not add to it the lesser gift? He granted the Son, and will he hold back material things? We should acknowledge, of course, that the person of the Son is one, where as human nature has been given for us by the divinity (ὥς ἐν μὲν τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ πρόσωπον· δέδοται δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς θεότητος ἡ ἀνθρωπεία φύσις ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.)” “The bread that I shall give, he says, remember, is my flesh which I shall give...””, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 143-145. Trans. Hill, 96.

<sup>310</sup> Phil.2:6-7.

<sup>311</sup> “Περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου ταῦτά φησιν, ὅτι Θεὸς ὢν οὐχ ἑωρᾶτο Θεὸς, τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν περικείμενος φύσιν. Αὐτῷ γὰρ τοίνυν ἀρμόττει τὸ, ὥς ἄνθρωπος. Ἡ γὰρ ἀναληφθεῖσα φύσις ἀληθῶς τοῦτο ἦν. Αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἦν· τοῦτο δὲ περιέκειται.”, *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569- 571. Trans. Hill, 70.

that Christ intercedes for our salvation, even though, emphasizing the activity of Christ's divine nature, he does not accept that the divine nature would pray for people. It is for the sake of the Trinitarian unity that Theodoret refuses to consider that Christ would beg and pray for mankind in his divinity. Theodoret may suggest that Christ is the mediator in his divine nature, but he completely denies that Christ could be a beggar according to his divine nature. The argument is that as God the divine does not beg for anything because he provides everything. Theodoret asserts that it would be a heretical interpretation to say that the divinity begs, for it would suggest that he had less glory. God and the Son of God are as two equal kings. If someone offends them and pleads forgiveness after that, they will receive the plea together, regardless of which one of them the plea is first addressed to. Kings do not beg from each other, but they share in the decision.<sup>312</sup> In the Commentaries on the Pauline letters, Theodoret preserved the emphasis on the subject nature of the person of Christ, while also saving his two-nature doctrine intact. In his commentary on Philippians, Theodoret refutes all monophysistic conceptions while commenting on *κενῶσις*.<sup>313</sup>

Theodoret expressed the equal divine kingship of the Trinity also as part of his discussion on the mercy seat. Commenting on Rom 3, where Paul writes about *the mercy seats* of the old and new covenants, Theodoret refused to give any inferior roles to Christ's divine nature. As God, Christ acted only with God in bestowing benevolence and responding to people who approached God through the mercy seat. He could serve as high priest and take on the role of victims only as a man. In the new covenant, Christ himself is the entire mercy seat. However, this title belongs to him both as a man and as God. Here again, Christ, in his divine nature, is the one

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<sup>312</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 144. Trans. Hill, 96. “τὸ γὰρ ἡμέτερον ἐδικαιώθη διὰ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ φανερωθέντος Θεοῦ, ὃς ἀχωρίστως αὐτῷ συνημμένος, τὴν τε ἄκραν ἐπαίδευσεν ἀρετὴν, καὶ τῶν βελῶν τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐφύλαξεν ἄγευστον, καὶ ἀμύητον, καὶ τῆς διαβολικῆς ἀπάτης ὑπέρτερον.” SC, 140, *Incarnatione*, PG 75,

1469. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 167.

<sup>313</sup> “Ἡ μορφή τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐσία τοῦ Θεοῦ; Πάντως ὅτι συνομολογήσουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἀρνοῦνται τὸ εἶναι Θεὸν τὸν Δεσπότην Χριστόν. Συλλογισώμεθα τοίνυν. Εἰ τοίνυν ἡ μορφή τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐσία Θεοῦ, οὐσία ἄρα δούλου ἢ τοῦ δούλου μορφή· καὶ εὗρεθήσονται οἱ τάναντία φρονοῦντες, δι’ ὧν ὁμολογήσουσι βεβαιοῦντες ἅπερ ὁμολογεῖν οὐκ ἐθέλουσι.” “...is the form of God the substance of God? They will admit it without question; they do not deny that Christ the Lord is God. So let us reason this way: if the form of God means the substance of God, then the form of a slave means the substance of a slave, and those of the opposite view will be found to be endorsing by what they admit what they do not want to admit.” *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 572-573. Trans. Hill, 71-72

who guides everything and responds to people with God. He sacrificed himself for mankind only in his human nature. The old mercy seat was lifeless and bloodless insofar as the blood of the victims at times was shed on it. In the new mercy seat, there is a life. The Ruler Christ and God himself is the mercy seat and the high priest. Being invested in human nature, he in his human nature is also the victim and the lamb, and completed our salvation with his own blood, while preserving immutability in his divine nature.<sup>314</sup>

In his commentaries on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret, when emphasizing the subject nature of the person of Christ (ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός), stresses the superiority of the divine nature over the human nature in Christ's incarnation. At the same time, he maintains the normal independent process of human birth, which would lead to a central role for the human nature of Christ. He has managed to keep his presentation without dissonance by enlarging his view of the predetermination of the Trinitarian God. The divine nature was in control from pre-existence. The inhumanation demanded from Christ the humiliation of descending to a lower stage than he had been before. The Ruler Christ voluntarily put away something he owned before. When interpreting Christ's inhumanation and his self-emptying (κενῶσις), his impassibility was protected by keeping the natures of Christ in isolation. This was possible by describing divine prominence as being fulfilled from eternity. Theodoret clearly argues, when referring to divine immutability, that the divine nature could not lose anything in Christ's inhumanation. Only the human nature was in the human form. In the meantime, the divine nature was fully present since it was invested in the human nature. Consequently, the divine nature was not affected in the stage of humiliation. It was only practicing its plan of *Oikonomia* with the human nature.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> "Διδάσκει τοίνυν ὁ θεῖος Ἀπόστολος, ὡς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἱλαστήριον ὁ Δεσπότης ἐστὶ Χριστός. Ἐκεῖνο γὰρ τὸ παλαιὸν τοῦτον τὸν τύπον ἐπλήρου. Ἀρμόττει δὲ αὐτῷ ὡς ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ ὄνομα, οὐχ ὡς Θεῷ. Ὡς γὰρ Θεός, αὐτὸς διὰ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου χρηματίζεται ὡς δὲ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ταύτην δέχεται τὴν προσηγορίαν, καθάπερ καὶ τὰς ἄλλας, οἷον πρόβατον, καὶ ἄμνός, καὶ ἁμαρτία, καὶ κατάρρα, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα. Καὶ τὸ μὲν παλαιὸν ἱλαστήριον καὶ ἄναιμον ἦν, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἄψυχον· τοῦ δὲ τῶν ἱερείων αἵματος τὰς ρανίδας ἐδέχετο. ", *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 64.

<sup>315</sup> " (ὅτι Θεὸς ὢν οὐχ ἐωρᾶτο Θεός, τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν περικείμενος φύσιν. Αὐτῷ γὰρ τοίνυν ἀρμόττει τὸ, ὡς ἄνθρωπος. Ἡ γὰρ ἀναληφθεῖσα φύσις ἀληθῶς τοῦτο ἦν. Αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἦν· τοῦτο δὲ περιέκειτο), " Rather, putting worth aside, he chose extreme lowliness and took on human form, taking on the likeness of human beings, and being found to have human appearance. He says this of God the Word that despite being God he was not seen to be God, being invested in human nature, the phrase human appearance therefore befitting him. After all, this was in truth the nature assumed by him and while he himself was not that, he was invested in it." *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569. Trans. Hill, 70.

Theodoret is not completely satisfied with the interpretation that the humiliation of Christ only affected the human nature. First, his dissatisfaction is, of course, caused by the notion that the Ruler Christ did not have his human nature in the time before the inhumanation and that the inhumanation was fulfilled according to decision, which was made and executed previously. Something happened when Christ only had the divine nature. In order to express the subject nature of the divinity, Theodoret necessitates the passible process of kenosis to affect the divine nature as well.

Theodoret believed that, although the new stage was lower to the divine nature than its former one, the divine nature necessarily did not experience any change in the process. All capability of being humble and all capability of practicing a low way of living was already hidden in the divine nature.<sup>316</sup> Let us see how Theodoret comes to this conclusion when preserving the stability of the divine nature within the chain of events. At first, in the beginning, Christ Jesus was God, and he was God by his very nature (*καὶ φύσει Θεός*). Second, in the Creation, the Trinitarian unity within the divine nature remained, and Christ remained, in his divine eminent being, the Creator himself with the Father. Third, after the creation, Christ, again as God, showed providence and was everywhere in creation.<sup>317</sup> He was equal with the Father, though he did not consider that to be something great. Herein lies the solution to Theodoret's theological problem of the impassible being in humiliation: in God's greatness was hidden the perfect capability to prefer littleness. Divinity was more capable of accepting human littleness than human beings would ever be, since there was no pride in divinity, and it was natural for Christ to show humbleness. If Christ had been

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<sup>316</sup> Theodoret does protect God's immutability when locating the capability of humbleness as an immutable property of the divine nature. Still, he does not mean God is affected in humbling himself and becoming human so that the human nature would be deified by the divine nature. The divine presence is described more as activity (*ενεργεια*) than as being part (*μεθεκσις*) of something. Theodoret's predecessor Gregory of Nyssa placed more emphasis on man's participation in divinity. The perfection of man is his constant progress. There are no limits in the progress, thus perfection is not something to grasp or possess. The one who searches is not a human soul but God himself. The most valuable definition of the progress is presented in Christology. The whole of mankind has ascended in Christ, and in him man is "resurrected" and his soul is unified with his body. See Young 1983, 117-119 and Wolfson 1976, 371.

<sup>317</sup> "Ὁ γὰρ φύσει Υἱὸς, οὐ κατὰ χάριν τοῦτο λαμβάνει· ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὸ κατὰ φύσιν. Ἀλλ' ὡς ἔφην ἤδη, τὰ θεῖα διδάσας, ἐνταῦθα τὰ περὶ τῆς οἰκονομίας διέξεισι, καὶ διδάσκει, ὡς αὐτὸς καὶ ποιητὴς πάντων ὡς Θεός, καὶ κληρονόμος πάντων ὡς ἄνθρωπος· καὶ δημιουργὸς ἀγγέλων ὡς Θεός, καὶ κρείττων γέγονε τούτων ὡς ἄνθρωπος· καὶ φύσει Υἱὸς, καὶ λαμβάνει τοῦτο πάλιν ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὅπερ εἶχεν ὡς Θεός. Καὶ τὰ ἐπαγόμενα δὲ συνωδὰ τοῖς εἰρημένοις", *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 685. Trans. Hill, 142.

an average man, he would consider his position as something great, as happens in the case of all people who, if they attain some rank above their worth, become proud. Unlike men, the divine nature, putting the worth aside, naturally chose extreme lowliness. He took a human form as Paul said it: “*taking on the likeness of human beings, and being found to have human appearance*”.<sup>319</sup>

To conclude, there was a desirable human virtue in the impassible divinity, the capability to accept humbleness. Theodoret does not deny the self-emptying of Christ to protect Christ’s impassibility, but he conceives of the extreme divine capability to accept humility. This capability existed in Christ’s divine nature already before its execution in the inhumanation. The Biblical expression of *κενῶσις* is upheld, and there is no change in Christ’s divine nature.

Theodoret also excludes the possibility that the humiliation would have been something apparent. There was real humiliation where the divinity was present, while it remained impassible. Theodoret asserts that Christ must have free will to choose to empty himself. The divine nature was not steered at this stage since it was never in need of anything. There was nothing for the divinity to receive but everything to give.<sup>320</sup> Christ was equal with God according to his divine nature. He had everything, and he had the divine power to rule with the God. The humiliation took place according to his free will. If the Son had been less than the Father, he would not have obeyed his own virtue of humility but would have fulfilled a compulsory role.<sup>321</sup> In this way, Theodoret also excludes the possibility that Christ could have been ordered to humble himself and to be unwillingly affected in the passible humiliation. The presence and execution of the humiliation was real, but it took place in the perspective of eternity, in the immutable way. Without a doubt, the divine nature was present in the suffering of humiliation, and yet it had no passible affections.

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<sup>319</sup> Phil. 2:8. “Θεὸς γὰρ ὢν, καὶ φύσει Θεὸς, καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα ἰσότητα ἔχων, οὐ μέγα τοῦτο ὑπέλαβε. Τοῦτο γὰρ ἴδιον τῶν παρ’ ἀξίαν τιμῆς τινος τετυχηκότων. Ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀξίαν κατακρύψας, τὴν ἄκραν ταπεινοφροσύνην εἵλετο, καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπεῖαν ὑπέδυ μορφήν. *«Ὡς ὁμοιωμάτι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος, καὶ σχήματι ἐὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος.»*”, *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569. Trans. Hill, 70, 72.

<sup>320</sup> *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569, 572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>321</sup> “Εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἴσος ἦν, ἀλλ’ ἐλάττων τοῦ Πατρὸς ὁ Υἱὸς, οὐ ταπεινοφρονῶν ὑπήκουσεν, ἀλλὰ τάξιν ἐπλήρωσεν”, *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569. Trans. Hill, 70, 72.

On the other hand, it was not possible for Theodoret to interpret the inhumanation only according to the divine act. The divine nature would paradoxically have limits on its unlimited essence without human nature. It would not be capable of showing its fullness to men, since it always would remain invisible to humankind. In order to reveal the loving Passion of God, it was necessary for the divine nature to assume the human nature, which is perceivable to men. When speaking of the Logos incarnated, Theodoret explains that the *God-Word*, who was God, was not seen to be God by his divine nature. Instead, the Logos was invested (*περικειμενος*) in human nature, which granted it a visible human appearance. On the other hand, Theodoret stresses Christ's unity in person and says that the human nature *did bear in himself divinity in its entirety*.<sup>322</sup> It must be noted that, in his Christological conception, Theodoret regards being in the form (*μορφῇ*) of something as having some of its substance. He does not express the apparent being of something, but he speaks of different kinds of appearances of two substantial natures in one person. The whole mystery of incarnation is not seen in its entire fullness but only to the extent that God has chosen to reveal it through human nature.<sup>323</sup> The divine nature always hides something unperceivable in itself. Theodoret refers to Col 2.9. "*Because in him all the fullness of divinity dwells in bodily fashion*".<sup>324</sup> Theodoret's expression of the divine nature, which was put into human nature, gives the obvious impression that the divine nature must have been present separately and yet involved in every human experience of Christ, including the birth of Christ, no matter how it is seen by men or how the divine nature is affected in its experiences.

In inhumanation, Christ the Lord assimilated the human nature in order to execute salvation in the presence of God and in order to be make himself seen and be understood by men. When explaining the inhumanation of Christ the Lord, Theodoret indicates clearly the structure of his Christology having one countenance (*πρόσωπον*), since both natures with their individual grounds (*ὑποστάσεις*) and universal either human or divine properties of their natures (*φύσεις*) are united in one countenance of the person of Christ.

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<sup>322</sup> "Ἡγοῦμαι τοίνυν, ἐπειδὴ κεφαλὴν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ὠνόμασε τὸν Χριστὸν, δῆλον δὲ ὅτι κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπειον ἡμῶν ἐστὶ κεφαλὴ, ὥς καὶ περὶ ἀνθρώπου καὶ ταῦτα εἰρῆσθαι, πᾶσαν ἐν αὐτῷ φέροντος τὴν θεότητα.", *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 608. Trans. Hill, 93.

<sup>323</sup> *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 569-572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>324</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 608. Trans. Hill, 92-93.



#### 4.4. Impassible Divine Nature Presented at First as the Educator and Later as the Subject in Christ's Growth and Temptation

In the beginning of *De Incarnatione*, Theodoret defines anthropological standpoints that are necessary to note in order to understand his concept of the relationship between the two natures in Christ. After the creation, the man and his human nature were faultless and full of all virtues. First, God had dignified human nature by donating to it its existence and condition in total accordance to God's own will. Both the inner and the outer properties were formed to be harmonious and beautiful. Second, man has a mind that governs over and guides his body. By saying this, Theodoret defines the subject which has the capability to keep all of man's passions in good control. The governing mind was filled with all wisdom, which means that it received its share of God's eternal wisdom. The expression of the governing mind that holds donated wisdom anticipates what Theodoret sees as the right position of Christ's human nature under the control of his divinity. Theodoret emphasises training in his conception of the process of trying to recall the original wisdom of God in one's mind. He does not exclude outer behaviours from virtuous training. On the contrary, he necessitates them at the side of increasing inner wisdom. This is the position that anticipates his concept of the properly trained humanity of Christ. Christ may educate his humanity, for the necessary skills for a virtuous life are possible to reveal to other people through the educated human nature. To conclude, Theodoret defines human nature as rational and capable of learning and teaching, and, in addition, capable of having in itself the skills to live in a virtuous way.<sup>325</sup>

Theodoret asserts that human nature is always gifted with the spiritual and immortal soul. In order to be a man and have universal human nature, it is essential to have a human soul.<sup>326</sup> In *De Incarnatione*, this Antiochian doctrine with the positive view of the full and trainable humanity of Christ led Theodoret to emphasize the education of

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<sup>325</sup> SC, *La Incarnation*, 10-12, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1420. (Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 138.) For more on Theodoret's anthropology, see Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 33-38.

<sup>326</sup> SC, *La Incarnation*, 10-12, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1420. (Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 138.) This structure is similar to the Antiochian concept of φύσις-ὑποστάσις- πρόσωπον, universal human nature – particular features – person as the whole.

every human instead of its subjection by the divine nature.<sup>327</sup> Theodoret, in his anthropological expressions, highlights that the purpose of education is to have a virtuous mind. God seeks the proper mindset in every man. The proper mind-set necessitates a good soul or mind that guides the created desires of man. There should always be a balance in man's mind. In the life of Christ, this means that the human nature had to be educated by the divine nature in order to have the right mindset to control Christ's behaviour in his human experiences.

Christ's human nature was equally free as that of all mankind. It also had free will to choose good and evil. However, it was not in all respects equal to man since Christ, being born of a woman, also came forth from a virgin womb. He was greater than us because of the indwelling (*ενοικῆσις*) and of the union (*ἔνωσις*) of the Word of God i.e. the divine nature. He never experienced any acts of sin. On the contrary, even though he was in the body, which has to meet the attacks of sin, he still overcame the power of sin. The human nature was able to make virtuous decisions and resist the assault of sin because it was educated by the divine nature. However, the divine nature's guidance, protection and strengthening of the human nature also had a part.<sup>328</sup>

The education that the divine nature offered to Christ's human nature was an essential part of God's divine plan for salvation. The human nature of man needed a solution for its human distress. The divine nature as the Creator of the human nature felt pity for it being threatened by the Evil One. The human nature was exposed to the bitter arrows of sin and it was condemned to death. The divine nature came to defend the human nature and overwhelmed all its enemies. This took place in the person of Christ. However, this defence did not mean that the divine nature took total control of the human nature, nor did it force the Evil to escape. Rather, it meant that the divine nature started to educate Christ's human nature. By this education, the

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<sup>327</sup> God has gifted man with power over all creation and still reminds him of his originality of "earth", as if to guide man to honour his Creator. (*καὶ κατακρύψας τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς τῆς θεότητος τῇ εὐτελείᾳ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος, καὶ τὸν ὁρώμενον ἄνθρωπον εἰς πάλιν ἀλείψας, καὶ νικήσαντα στεφανώσας· καὶ παιδόθεν μὲν τὴν ἀρετὴν ἐκδιδάξας, καὶ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ἀκρότατον ἀγαγὼν, ἀήττητον δὲ φυλάξας, καὶ τῶν βελῶν τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐλεύθερον.*) "He anointed the visible man for the battle and crowned the winner. Beginning from his childhood educated him for virtue..." SC, *La Incarnation*, 12-18, 44-50. *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1421, 1433. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 138, 146.

<sup>328</sup> SC, *La Incarnation*, 38-53, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1432-1433. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 145-146.

divine nature anointed the visible man for the battle against all sin. The education of virtues began in Christ's childhood. The education was successful since the human nature of Christ did not only attain the virtues but was led to the fullness of righteousness and preservation of freedom from conquering sin. The divine nature permitted the human nature to experience death in order to prove the injustice of sin and to destroy the power of death. The one whose own deeds had not earned him death was able to prove the injustice of sin through his own death.<sup>329</sup>

The very results of the education of Christ's human nature were measured in Christ's temptation. By the "God-Word of God" (the divine nature), the human nature was led to challenge the adversary (Satan) and fight against it. Theodoret describes the importance of the education, referring to the virtues which aided the human nature to withstand temptation. He compares human nature to "the strong man" who was able to protect his property (Matt. 12:29). The human nature was like "an invincible athlete", to be crowned as the victor in the battle against Satan and to encourage all human natures in their battle against evil. However, the human nature, while having all virtues, was not independent of the presence of the divine nature. According to its perfect virtues, the human nature fled to the divine nature. The human nature promised to obey all the commands of the divine nature and to accept servitude voluntarily. Theodoret makes it fully clear that the divine nature itself was not tempted. Jesus was taken by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil after his baptism. However, it was only the human nature that was taken (Theodoret calls the human nature here "the temple of the seed of David" to stress Christ's full humanity). The Holy Spirit did not bring to the battle any other than the temple formed in the Virgin for the God-Word.<sup>330</sup>

The Divine nature hid itself in the Temptation. Jesus spent forty days and nights in the wilderness without eating. With divine help, he could have exceeded this ancient measure of fasting, but he did not want to since it would have revealed his divine abilities. If he would have done so, the Opponent would have immediately run away

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<sup>329</sup> *SC, La Incarnation, 44-50, Incarnatione, PG 75, 1433.* Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 138

<sup>330</sup> "οὐ γὰρ τὸν Θεὸν Λόγον εἰς τὴν πρὸς τὸν διάβολον πάλην ἀπήγαγε τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἀλλ' ὃν ἐν τῇ Παρθένῳ διέπλασε", *SC, La Incarnation, 54-58, Incarnatione, PG 75, 1437.* Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 148-149.

from the struggle against him since the hidden one would be revealed. On the contrary, he presented himself as very human. He only showed the suffering of the human nature. The divine nature also allowed real hunger to occur in order to give the Tempter the opportunity to grip the human nature. Otherwise, Satan would have counted all the divine appearances that he was familiar with. These were the angel choir and the rising star at Jesus' birth, the perfect virtuous life presented by Jesus up to the temptation and God's words both in the Scriptures and in the hearing of many men. When Satan saw the human hunger that Jesus could not endure more other men before him, he approached and thought that he could win easily. Satan was able to see Christ as entirely virtuous and armoured with righteousness. However, he could also see the weak point in Christ's protection in his hunger.<sup>331</sup>

Theodoret explains that, at this very point, Christ hid his divine nature so entirely that Satan only saw the opportunity and concentrated on using his former way of deceiving man. He describes how Satan daringly approached Christ, being sure that he had found in him the weakness of his forefathers. Previously, Satan had deceived Adam with food alone to leave his untroubled life voluntarily and, as a result, he was harnessed with the yoke of swelter, humiliation and death. Satan absolutely did not recognize the divinity and talked to Christ the Lord, saying, "*if you are the Son of God...*" (Matt. 4:3). After realizing that he could not deceive Christ, he escaped and said, "*what do you want with us, oh Son of God?*" (Matt. 8:29). Also, in another passage, he says, "*I know who you are the Son of God*" (Mark 1:24). Satan had to learn that the human nature in Christ was nurtured by the divine nature. Theodoret interprets Jesus' answer 'Man does not live on bread alone, he says, but by every word coming from the mouth of God' (Matt. 4:4) by emphasising that God is able to nourish without bread since it is not only bread that sustains the life of people. Theodoret does not deny but necessitates the presence of the divine nature in the temptation. He refers to the presence by saying, 'The Word of God was sufficient to maintain the entire human nature'. The divine presence in human life is always active and dynamic. Theodoret compares the nurturing of the human nature to miracles where God gave food to people. The miracles took place when God

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<sup>331</sup> "Λαίτος διετέλεσεν ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα, καὶ νύκτας ἰσαριθμούς· οὐ γὰρ ἠθέλησεν ὑπερβῆναι τῶν πάλαι γεννησενότων τὸ μέτρον, ἵνα μὴ φύγῃ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ ἀντίπαλος μάχην, ἵνα μὴ γνωρίσας τὸν κρυπτόμενον, φύγῃ τὴν πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον πάλιν. SC, *La Incarnation*, 54-64, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1437, 1440. Trans. PásztoriKupán, 148-150

nurtured the people of Israel in the wilderness and in cases of individual men who got their food in an exceptional way. The idea that Jesus opposed Satan appealed to the divine power, and Christ answered Satan by stating that God takes care of human nature, which only encouraged Satan to proceed. Immediately, Satan set two more temptations since Jesus, while admitting divine power, also gave the message that he was a real man dependent on God. Theodoret describes the divine nature as present in Christ's temptation all the time, giving divine assistance to the human nature. Still, it was only the human nature that was tempted and that was proved to have perfect virtues to resist evil while suffering hunger.<sup>332</sup>

Theodoret also presents soteriological reasons to explain why it is not possible for the divine nature to address the temptation. If it was not the assumed human nature that was exposed to the temptation, then it would have been the divinity himself who had fought against the devil, and the one who had earned the crowning after the victory would have been God himself. The human nature, either of the Christ or another, would not have gained the necessary remedy for the victory. It was also a question of the dignity of God, though it was not suitable for the God-Word to replace the human mind and force the man into obedience since it only would have been a great honour for the Devil to have the opportunity to go to battle with God. Satan also would have a reason to demand God to call off His salvation plan, though he could rightly deny the victory of man. The first battle against Adam would have been the only testimony of the battle between the man and Satan. Satan had defeated the man, defeating him by deceit, not force. Now, there had to be another fair battle to allow the change concerning the stage of the human nature. As a matter of fact, it was the mind and soul of the human nature that primarily needed the remedy. The human mind had accepted the deceit before the human body, and the body only gave the shape to this wrong decision to take the fruit that was forbidden to eat. Christ came to raise both the fallen flesh and the mind, which was made in the image of the Creator with great dignity. Another reason for the necessity of the other fair battle was that without it, all sinners would have had reason to appeal to their unfair temptation. They would have an excuse to blame God for giving them a weak mind

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<sup>332</sup> “Τούτων ἀκούσας κρύπτει μὲν τὴν θεότητα, ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἀνθρωπείας διαλέγεται φύσεως. «Οὐκ ἐπ’ ἄρτῳ μόνῳ, λέγων, ζήσεται ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ’ ἐν παντὶ ῥήματι διὰ στόματος ἐκπορευομένῳ Θεοῦ.» “, *SC, La Incarnation*, 54-68, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1439, 1441. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 150.

to keep the Law of God. They could say that God himself did not want to assume the mind that they possessed.<sup>333</sup>

The divine nature could not take the place of the mind of the man Jesus since it would have harmed God's impassibility. If there were no human mind in Christ in the time of temptation, then the divine nature would not have been the supporter of the human nature but the object of temptation itself. If God had taken the task of the human mind, he himself would have been fighting with the Evil. Then God would have hungered with the body of Christ, and he would have experienced change and would have been, at the same time, passible. This would have been the case also when Christ thirsted, suffered, slept, grieved, was afraid and endured all human torments. It would be impossible for God to preserve his impassibility and immutability without taking distance from the affects of Temptation. He was present to support the human nature but did not let the divinity itself be tempted. He did not overcome the Evil with his divine power but left the decision to the human nature, relying on its wisdom and virtues.<sup>334</sup>

How did Theodoret follow his "doctrine of education" in his later presentation of the commentary on the Pauline Letters? In what way is the immutable presence of the Divine nature defined? Let us examine his interpretation of the event of temptation. Theodoret describes the victory over the Evil One by simply saying that, having assumed the human nature, the divine nature "kept it free from sins". Therefore, the divine nature in Christ was still like a perfect soul in a man, guiding all passions of the body. This presentation also denotes a greater authority of divinity in Christ. The divine protection and authority is also expressed in Paul's letter to Timothy: 'humanity was justified in Spirit' (*ἐδοικαίωθη ἐν Πνεύματι*)<sup>335</sup>. The Trinity was involved in justification, just as its unity necessitated.<sup>336</sup> With soteriological expression, Theodoret continues that the only-begotten God-Word in person put on

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<sup>333</sup>“Ταῦτα τὴν Ἀπολιναρίου ἐλέγχει ματαιολογίαν, ὃς ἀντὶ τοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου ἐνοικῆσαι λέγει τῇ προσληφθείσῃ σαρκί. Εἰ γὰρ νοῦν οὐκ εἶχεν ἀνθρώπινον ἢ ἀναληφθεῖσα φύσις, Θεὸς μὲν ὁ πρὸς τὸν διάβολον ἀγωνισάμενος ἦν, Θεὸς δὲ ὁ τὴν νίκην ἀναδησάμενος· Θεοῦ δὲ νενικηκότος, ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδὲν ἀπονάμην τῆς νίκης, ὥς οὐδὲν εἰς ταύτην εἰσενεγκὼν “, *SC, La Incarnation*, 68-80, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1444-1445. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 151-153.

<sup>334</sup> *SC, La Incarnation*, 68-74, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1444. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 152.

<sup>335</sup> I Tim. 3:16.

<sup>336</sup> *Ad I Tim.*, PG 82, 812. Trans. Hill, 220.

the nature of Adam and preserved its innocence of any sin. It did this for the sake of mankind and to pay the debt of human nature. Christ carried out God's plan and cancelled the indebtedness common to all human beings. Thus, Theodoret's viewpoint rises both from the execution of the divine plan and from the human decisions of an "educated man".<sup>337</sup>

Here, Theodoret has taken distance from his previous expressions in *De Incarnatione*,<sup>338</sup> where he emphasised Christ's two kinds of natures over the unity in person. He had asserted that the human nature alone made the decisions concerning the obedience in the Temptation, by its free will, though in the education of the divine nature. In his Commentary on the Pauline letters, the role of the person of Christ is emphasised. In *De Incarnatione*, Christ answered Satan exclusively from his human nature, not at all from his divine nature. When Satan tried to persuade Christ to order stones to become bread, the divine nature withdrew to the background. After hearing the words of the Evil One, the Lord hid his Godhead (*κρύπτει μὲν τὴν Θεότητα*) and only spoke from his human nature (*ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἀνθρωπείας διαλέγεται φύσεως*).<sup>339</sup>

In his later works, such as the "Commentary on the Letters of Paul" and *De Providentia Orationes Decem*,<sup>340</sup> Theodoret changed his presentation to emphasise Christological unity and the divine authority through the person of Christ. He describes how both natures of Christ were equally present in the temptation. Theodoret describes how Satan approaches Christ in the same way as he once came to Adam, but he surprisingly finds Adam's Creator now wrapped around Adam's nature (*Ἀλλὰ προσελήλυθε μὲν ὡς τῷ Ἀδὰμ, εὔρε δὲ τὸν τοῦ Ἀδὰμ Ποιητὴν τὴν τοῦ*

<sup>337</sup> "τῇ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάσει, φημί, καὶ τῇ αἰωνίῳ ζωῇ καὶ τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν. Δικαιοσύνην δὲ Θεοῦ διὰ τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι ἔφη, οὐ μόνον τὴν ἡμῖν χορηγουμένην, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ τῆς οἰκονομίας μυστηρίῳ προφανῶς δεικνυμένην. Οὐ γὰρ ἐξουσία τὴν ἡμετέραν ὥκονόμησε σωτηρίαν, οὐδὲ προστάγματι καὶ λόγῳ κατέλυσε τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κράτος, ἀλλ' ἐκέρασε τῷ δικαίῳ τὸν ἔλεον. Καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ μονογενὴς τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος, τὴν τοῦ Ἀδὰμ ἐνδυσάμενος φύσιν, καὶ πάσης ἁμαρτίας φυλάξας ἀμύητον, ταύτην ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσενήνοχε, καὶ τὸ χρέος τῆς φύσεως ἀποδοῦς, τὸ κοινὸν πάντων ἀνθρώπων διέλυσεν ὄφλημα." *Ad Rom*, PG 82, 60. Trans. Hill, 50.

<sup>338</sup> Clayton and Pásztori-Kupán date *De Incarnatione* before 431. Clayton 2007, 76. Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 31.

<sup>339</sup> *Pentalogium de Incarnatione*, PG 84, 80.

<sup>340</sup> Earlier authors such as Garnier, Schulze, Bardenhewer and Opitz dated these sermons prior to the Council of Ephesus in 341, but later writers like Richard, Bertram and Brok have dated them after 435. Clayton 2007, 168.

Ἀδὰμ περικείμενον φύσιν, καὶ φησι πρὸς αὐτόν·).<sup>341</sup> After the Nestorian controversy, Theodoret seems to have given up his insistence on the extreme independency of human nature in the Temptation story. The divine nature is now all the time present and even dominates the human nature. The person of Christ is tempted with both of its natures.<sup>342</sup>

#### **4.5. The Impassible Divine Nature in Christ's Suffering, Resurrection and Ascension**

Theodoret, in his *De incarnatione domini*, expresses his dualistic conception also when presenting the following stages of *οἰκονόμια*. Starting with the overwhelming of the Trinitarian God over all men, he says that the God Word, having the divine nature, would have been able to accomplish man's salvation simply by his mere command. This kind of impassible and non-involved act of salvation would have been possible since God was in need of nothing in his being and in his working. Yet, God decided to assume the whole passible human nature, both the body and the soul. Theodoret explains that this happened in order to give us a share in God's success. In his divine nature, God took on human nature, which had sinned in the lives of all other men except Christ the Lord, and he made the human nature perfect by his own suffering. When describing God's involvement in the salvation act, Theodoret seems to attribute the suffering also to the divine God-Word, who has the motive to give the sacrifice in order to release human nature from the bitter tyranny of sin, of the devil and of death. On the one hand, Theodoret is able to speak of the suffering of the God-Word, as in his later works, in the sense of the person of Christ. On the other hand, he immediately adds that it was through the assumed humanity of Christ that the God-Word executed the salvation of the entire human race. In his Commentary on the Pauline Letters, he contends that, as the person, 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made curse for us' (Gal. 3:13), in accordance with Paul. Yet,

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<sup>341</sup> PG 83, 752.

<sup>342</sup> Clayton does not see theological progress as the reason for the change in Theodoret's expressions in *De Providentia Orationes Decem*. He suggests that Theodoret does not stress the independence of the human nature anymore since Theodoret had given up the use of the so-called concrete terms to refer to the humanity of Christ after 433. Clayton 2007, 168. Pásztori-Kupán interprets Theodoret as continuing his eagerness to show that Christ defeated the devil with human wisdom and not with divine power. Pásztori-Kupán 2007, 130. In light of my analysis of Theodoret's commentary on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret consistently mentions the divine dominance over the human nature. From this viewpoint, it would be difficult to ignore the possibility of theological progress in Theodoret's Christology.



when it comes to the divine nature, this is not literally true. Theodoret emphasises that the fountainhead of all good could not change into a curse. These words only express what, in the wide sense (according to the person), happened through Christ, i.e. man's salvation from sin. Similarly, it would be misleading to address the saying 'he became sin for us' to concern the divine nature of Christ. There was no change of righteousness in Christ. The divine nature remained immutable. The sayings of alteration concerning the divine nature only refer to the assumption of the human nature.<sup>343</sup>

In *De Incarnatione*, the human nature was also modelled as the temple to be destroyed and, after that, to be renewed. Theodoret did not give explicitly the role of the central subject nature to Christ's person, but instead he gave it to the human or divine nature depending on the nature of the expression. Theodoret contends that 'the temple' was different from the one who dwells on it. Christ did say to the Jews, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up' (John 2:19). Theodoret builds his interpretation of the text on his anthropology and his Christology. He says that the destruction of the temple is the detachment of the soul from the body, since death is the division of the soul from the body. If the soul is separated from the temple, the temple is destroyed. Christ did not say, 'Destroy me' but 'the temple'. The Jews did destroy the temple, giving it up to be crucified and put to death, and resulting in the separation of the conjoined of soul and body from each other. The God-Word redeemed this destroyed temple. Although the temple was allowed to be destroyed, this happened only in order to let the temple, as a representative of the human nature, to experience the great resurrection afterwards. This happened so that mortality could be put aside, so that it could take off its corruptibility and put on its incorruptibility, so that it could be made the first among those fallen asleep, so that the labour-pains of its corruption could be relieved afterwards and that it could appear as the firstborn from the dead. The resurrection was the return of the soul to her own body. By his own resurrection, Christ, through his human nature, was made to proclaim the gospel of the resurrection of all humankind.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>343</sup>SC, *La Incarnation*, 80-96, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1448-1449, 1452. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 154-156.

<sup>344</sup> “Ἐτερος δὲ ὁ κατοικήσας κατὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς φύσεως, καὶ ἕτερος ὁ ναός. Διὸ καὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἔλεγε· «Λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν.» Λύσις δὲ τοῦ ναοῦ, ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος ἡ διάζευξις· θάνατος γάρ ἐστι ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος ἀναχώρησις· οὐκοῦν τὴν λύσιν τοῦ ναοῦ

Theodoret refuted all possibilities that the divine nature itself would have suffered in the Passion in *De Incarnatione*. He even denied the possibility that the divine mind would have mental pain from the suffering. The possibility would have meant that he had taken the place of the mind (soul) of the human nature. Theodoret asserts:<sup>345</sup>

‘We also believe the Lord himself, who said: ‘My soul is deeply grieved, even to death’ (Matt. 26:38). The rational (soul) in us accepts the sensation of sorrow, but if the God-Word replaced the mind and accepted the passions of the mind, then (the God-Word) himself grieved, was afraid, ignorant, agonised, and was strengthened by angelic aid.’<sup>346</sup>

Theodoret emphasises the power and impassibility of the divine nature by referring to Jesus’ words, according to which Jesus only had the divine power to lay down his soul in death and take it back again in the resurrection. The difference between the divine nature and the soul of the human nature can be seen in those words. The difference is between the one who lays down and the one that is laid down. God himself is the one who lays down, and the soul is subjected to his power.<sup>347</sup>

Theodoret’s conception of the absolute immutability of the divine is also seen in his description of Christ’s prayer in his agony in *De Incarnatione*. Theodoret believes that there is a connection between prayer and pain in the prayer’s mind. He asks, ‘Who was it then who prayed, offering up pleas and supplications with strong crying and tears?’ Theodoret describes the one who prayed as the one who was trying to persuade God to help him in his agony. The prayer has learned obedience from what he suffered. He was tested and educated, and he learned what he did not know before. This is why Theodoret deems impossible to attribute any prayer to Christ’s immutable divinity. The divinity could not have been tested in any way, received

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ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐργάζεται χωρισμός·“, SC, *La Incarnation*, 90-96, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1452. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 156.

<sup>345</sup> SC, *La Incarnation*, 90-102, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1452-1453. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 157.

<sup>346</sup> “πιστεύομεν δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ Κυρίῳ λέγοντι· «Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου.» Τῆς γὰρ λύπης τὴν αἴσθησιν τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν λογικὸν ὑποδέχεται· εἰ δὲ ἀντὶ νοῦ ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ὑπάρχων, τὰ τοῦ νοῦ κατεδέχετο πάθη, αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ λυπηθεὶς, καὶ φοβηθεὶς, καὶ ἀγνοήσας, καὶ ἀγωνιάσας, καὶ ἀγγελικῇ συμμαχίᾳ ῥωσθείς·“, SC, *La Incarnation*, 90-102, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1452-1453. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 157.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

perfection gradually, learned anything new or been in need of anything more. Theodoret concludes that the God-Word is always without need. He had no need to pray. He knows everything before its genesis. He is the one who possesses the divine plan. There is nothing for him to learn. He himself is venerated by all, and he himself is able to hear the prayers of others. When answering prayer, he wipes away all tears from every face and, consequently, he himself cannot be in need of pleading for consolation for himself. He is impassible and incapable of being constrained by suffering. He is also eternally immortal, and it is impossible for him to be afraid of death. Consequently, the divine nature did not seek to be delivered from death. On the contrary, Theodoret addresses all these human properties (*ἴδια*) to the human nature. The assumed manhood feared death and persisted in prayers. It was part of the divine nature to give space in Christ for fear, which belonged to his human properties. Christ wanted to demonstrate that he had assumed human nature, not the nature of angels. Christ gave space to the human nature in order to gain reconciliation for the sins of the people. To withdraw to the background was active work and was motivated by love.<sup>348</sup>

In his ascension, the two natures of Christ were made equal to each other. The divine nature was not changed, but the human nature was changed and received what Christ already owned in his divine nature. The divine properties were completely shared with the human nature. This is the matter of the *deification* of man.<sup>349</sup> In his divine nature, Christ had always been, and is, the Creator and Ruler, and he is located higher than the angels in dignity. His throne is eternal, for it stands forever, and he is the king forever. The divine nature “is everything” always, and it does not “become anything”. The human nature is what was made a little lower than the angels while suffering death, and exalted higher than the angels, anointed and crowned as king after death. There is a difference in verbs between the descriptions of the positions of the Christ’s natures in the ascension. This difference is between ‘to be’ and ‘to become’. The divine nature ‘is’ everything high and perfect, and the human nature

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<sup>348</sup> “ὁ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀθάνατος, ἀλλ’ οὐ δεδιὼς τὸν θάνατον, καὶ μετὰ κραυγῆς ἱκετεύων ἀπαλλαγῆναι θανάτου. Οὐκοῦν ἴδια ταῦτα τῆς ἀναληφθείσης ἀνθρωπότητος, ἥ καὶ τὸν θάνατον ἐδεδῖει, καὶ διετέλει προσευχομένη, τῆς ἐνοικούσης Θεότητος τῷ φόβῳ παραχωρούσης, ἵνα διὰ τῶν παθημάτων δειχθῇ τοῦ ληφθέντος ἡ φύσις.” , SC, *La Incarnation*, 106-118, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1457,1460. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 160.

<sup>349</sup> See more in chapter 5.6.

‘becomes’ everything high and perfect. This distinction excludes all possibilities that the divine nature would have been passible in the human life of Christ.<sup>350</sup>

These final stages of *oikonomia*,<sup>351</sup> in which Theodoret had formerly asserted the divine impassibility, were given a different emphasis in his later work “The Commentary on Pauline Letters”.<sup>352</sup> First, Theodoret clearly defines the presence of both natures in all experiences of Christ. According to the communication of names, he has determined that some sayings about Christ may refer only to one nature, and yet it is not possible to deny the presence of the other. Two natures are present all the time within the one person of Christ, also in the Passion. The divine nature is impassible and, accordingly, the passion that demands suffering is naturally to be attributed completely to the human nature. Yet, the presence of the divine nature in the passion should not be denied. The absence of the divine nature would mean a dissonance with God’s divine plan. It would be impossible for the divinity to be absent, for the Biblical sacrifices are entirely originated by God. He himself ordained the sacrifices to confirm the covenants. In addition, highlighting God’s lovingkindness and Christ’s humility, Theodoret asserts that God was willing to offer himself for suffering. However, since the divine nature was immortal, he had to ordain the substitute offering of animals, for through the blood of the victims it was possible to realize a type of death. The blood of animals was a type of the blood of Christ the Lord. So, divinity itself was already involved in the old sacrifices through substitutions, which were established by God. In order to make the original sacrifice perfect, to be in succession of the former type, Christ the Lord came into the world.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> SC, *La Incarnation*, 102-118, *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1456-1457, 1460. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 158-160.

<sup>351</sup> God’s salvation as *oikonomia* in Christ began in the world at the incarnation. The final stages of incarnation refer to Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection.

<sup>352</sup> *Ad I Thes.*, PG 82, 633, *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 745. Trans. Hill, 109, 175.

<sup>353</sup> “Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἡ θεία φύσις ἀθάνατος, διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν ἱερείων τὸν τύπον ἐπλήρωσε τοῦ ἀνάτου, καὶ τὴν διαθήκην ἐκύρωσεν. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐνηνθρώπησεν ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος, καὶ σῶμα εἶχε θνητὸν, οὐκέτι τῶν ἀλόγων ἐδεήθη θυμάτων, ἀλλὰ τῷ οἰκείῳ οὐκέτι τῶν ἀλόγων ἐδεήθη θυμάτων, ἀλλὰ τῷ οἰκείῳ αἵματι τὴν καινὴν ἐκύρωσε διαθήκην. Ἀρμόττει γὰρ τῇ μὲν σκιᾷ ὁ τύπος, τῷ δὲ σῶματι ἡ ἀλήθεια. Τύπος δὲ ἦν, τοῦ μὲν βαπτίσματος, τὸ ὕδωρ· τοῦ δὲ σωτηρίου αἵματος, τῶν ἀλόγων αἷμα· τῆς δὲ τοῦ θείου Πνεύματος χάριτος, ἡ τοῦ ὑσσώπου θερμότης· τοῦ δὲ καινοῦ ἐνδύματος, τὸ ὀκκινὸν ἔριον· τοῦ δὲ ἀπαθοῦς τῆς θεότητος, τὸ κέδρινον ξύλον, ἃσηπτον γὰρ τὸ ξύλον· τοῦ δὲ πάθους ἀνθρωπότητος, ἡ τῆς δαμάλεως κόνις.”, *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 741-744, Trans. Hill, 173-174.

This argumentation is not as strongly based on two nature Christology as Theodoret's former arguments on the two natures of Christ. Theodoret states that the divine nature is substantially present in the suffering and resurrection of Christ, yet he preserves its impassibility. This line of thought enables explanations of paradoxes in his Biblical interpretation. Theodoret purposefully seems to create many mysteries of the divine impassibility. In his comments on the Letter to the Ephesians, Theodoret discusses one divine unknown mystery. Paul writes in Eph 3.8., 'to me, the least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach among the Gentiles the good news of the unsearchable riches of Christ.' The word 'unsearchable' (*ἀνεξίχνιαστον*) is the keyword for Theodoret's interpretation. He says that it refers to the properties of the divine nature. With this single word, Theodoret contends that Paul refutes the anti-Nicaean heresies. This word reveals that the unsearchable Trinitarian God is always in Christ. Both the divine nature and his riches are unsearchable. Theodoret asserts that man is not qualified to preach the whole of Christ because of his unsearchableness. This is what Paul meant when he said that he is preaching the mystery. Similarly, Theodoret maintains that Paul elaborates when he says, 'and enlighten everyone as to the dispensation of the mystery hidden from the ages in God, who created everything through Jesus Christ'.<sup>354</sup> We should not try to search for what is unsearchable but only to preach it. The mystery is eternal, for only God knows it. Even the unseen powers did not know the mystery. Now, it has been revealed in Christ, though it remains partly unsearchable. Both the Christ and the Church had a special dispensation in the process of revealing the mystery. The dispensation concerned the Church but affected Christ. The Passion of Christ the Lord enabled the grace of reconciliation to the Church.<sup>355</sup>

In the resurrection, Christ's divine nature was not the object but the subject of the raising from the dead. Theodoret argues that it was not the divine nature of the Only-begotten that was raised up. The divine nature had not suffered, for it was immune to suffering. It did not die and, accordingly, it was not raised from the dead. Instead of the divine nature, the Only-begotten suffered as a man, and as a man he rose from the dead. However, Theodoret avoids denying the presence and involvement of the

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<sup>354</sup> Eph. 3:9.

<sup>355</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 528-529. Trans. Hill, 43.

divinity and asserts that Jesus is not any other than the Only-begotten Son. Theodoret leaves space for the paradox that the divine nature is involved in the Passion, while preserving its impassibility. One can preach two messages of Christ that are not consistent with each other. However, it is possible not to see the dissonance, for there are unsearchable mysteries in the divine nature of Christ. Paradoxically, Christ the Lord offers himself and suffers as the Person with two natures while the divine nature is eternally impassible. In order to follow the divine plan of love, the divinity is involved in suffering, being present, however, in an immutable way.<sup>356</sup>

Theodoret has interwoven his doctrinal presentation with salvation history. He stresses the term “love”. The impassible divine nature practices God’s eternal wisdom and love throughout. Divinity enters human lives. The divine nature has had this position in its mind eternally as it has eternal love. Although the new stage was lower for the divine nature than the former one, it did not necessarily experience change since it already embodied, hidden within it, the potential to be humble and the potential to live a lowly life. The perfect ability to prefer littleness was hidden in God’s greatness. On the other hand, it was not possible for Theodoret to interpret inhumanation only according to the divine act. The divine nature still had limits on its unlimited essence. It was not capable of showing its fullness to men since it always remained invisible to humankind. In order to reveal the loving Passion of God, it was necessary that divine nature assumed human nature, which is perceivable to men. Theodoret defends divine immutability with a divine plan of God, which eternally possesses involvement with humanity. He also adds the use of the paradox of unsearchable divinity in order to leave space for another presentation: the presentation of the emotional and passible presence of the divine God in human life.

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<sup>356</sup> ὥς οὔτε ἡ θεία τοῦ Μονογενοῦς φύσις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἠγέρθη, ἀπαθὴς γάρ· οὔτε μὴν ἕτερος υἱὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς παρὰ τὸν μονογενῆ Υἱόν· ἀλλ’ ὁ αὐτὸς μὲν ἔστιν, ἔπαθε δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἀνέστη ὡς ἄνθρωπος. *Ad I Thes.*, PG 82, 633. Trans. Hill, 109.

## 5. GOD'S IMPASSIBLE PRESENCE IN PASSIBLE HUMAN LIFE

### 5.1. The Ruler Christ with His Divine Nature Became a Full Man – Soteriological Argumentation in *the Divine Plan*

In the Commentary on the Pauline letters, Theodoret proceeds with his Antiochian two-nature Christology: there is one person and two natures in Christ. However, the subject nature of the person of Christ has taken over in this presentation. The voices of divine authority and divine presence in human passibility have simultaneously strengthened. Still, Theodoret's expressions clearly define the human origin of Christ's human nature. He is ready to say: the Ruler Christ, as the "First born", was born in David's bloodline, which indicates that Jesus belonged to humankind and had a universal human nature. Christ completely assimilated the human nature from the Virgin Mary. She experienced the growth of her womb and, after giving birth, the breastfeeding of the infant.<sup>357</sup>

Before the incarnation, the Ruler Christ in his person was God and the Son of God. He also was a designer and a subject with God in creation. All the descriptions of the divine and its actions that concern the time before the incarnation refer to Christ's divine nature. However, although the very existence of the Christ's human nature was only to come, it already existed in the divine plan in pre-existence. This must be true because there cannot be any change in divine nature. In other words, the incarnation existed in the mind of the Trinity. It was not until the incarnation that the idea of Christ's human nature, according to the divine plan, was fulfilled. It was time to execute God's graceful deeds according to love and mercy. At that time God became a father to the Ruler Christ. From this moment, the fatherhood was received also by Christ's human nature. Theodoret argues that the change for the double type of fatherhood was revealed beforehand through the Scriptures, in a passage that speaks in future tense: "I shall be his Father and he will be my Son".<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> "Διὰ πάντων, φησὶ, τῶν προφητῶν τὰ περὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ προεθέσπισεν· ὃς ἐξ αὐτοῦ φύσει πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων γεγεννημένος, καὶ τοῦ Δαβὶδ υἱὸς ἐχρημάτισεν, ὡς ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀναλαβὼν.", *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49. Trans. Hill, 45. See also *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1161. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 162.

<sup>358</sup> Hebr. 1:5. Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν, *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 685-688. Trans. Hill, 142-143.

The future tense in this text has the connotation that Christ's becomming involved a limitation of time. With regard to the Trinitarian unity, Theodore does not accept any limitation of time concerning the divinity, but attributes them to Christ's human nature. Consequently, the Biblical prediction above has been completely addressed to the human nature of Christ. Accordingly, when the Scripture says, "this day I have begotten you",<sup>359</sup> it is exclusively said with reference to the human nature. It does not indicate eternal begetting, but the begetting which is associated with time. The existence of the human nature of Christ was fulfilled through a completely different fatherhood from the former one. The divine nature did not receive anything new in the incarnation since it already embodied the status of the Son. On the contrary, the human nature inherited everything that Christ already possessed according to his divine nature. Theodore necessitates the presence of human nature at the very beginning of the incarnation, for there could not be any action in time without the human nature. Theodore also refutes any kind of *communicatio idiomatum* that implies something new passing from humanity to the divine nature in a manner that would refer to a possible limitation of the divine fullness and impassibility. He describes how the divinity takes and receives the potential to use and take part in human experiences through its human nature, all the while preserving its divine immutability. On the one hand, as God, Christ already was everywhere in the world. On the other hand, as a man, he came into the world to be "the firstborn" among many brothers.<sup>360</sup> Theodore retains his conception of divine eternity, immutability and impassibility and defends it with many Biblical references. Expressing his view of the textual unity of the Bible, he presents arguments that are based on both the Old and the New Testaments. Though he works with a wide scale of various passages, he does not given up his doctrinal certainty of two-nature Christology, which is obviously seen in his commentary on the Pauline Letters.

In this commentary, Theodore continues to assert the divine immutability of Christ, but he does not emphasize the independence of the natures as categorily as he did before. Now, he stresses the controlling role of the divine nature of Christ, and

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<sup>359</sup> Hebr. 1:5.

<sup>360</sup> "Ἀλλὰ καὶ πανταχοῦ ἦν ὡς Θεός, καὶ εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην εἰσῆλθεν ὡς ἄνθρωπος", *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 685-688. Trans. Hill, 142-143.



describes the role of Christ's person as the Ruler Christ. Especially, in the moment of inhumanation, the immutability of the divine nature was protected with the authority of the divine nature. The divine nature was not in danger of affection since its presence was a voluntary action of the divine nature itself. The divine authority prevails all through the stages of inhumanation as well as throughout the entire salvation history. In this process, the divinity experienced no changes in itself, but effected everything else since its becoming present was voluntary. In spite of the extremely different kinds of properties of the two natures, the person of Christ sustains its oneness, which was due to his endless authority and subject nature. There is no other alternative than to accept that the person of Christ was one in Theodoret's presentation.<sup>361</sup>

Only the form (*μορφή*) of the human nature was affected and subject to change during the incarnation. By claiming such, Theodoret does not mean anything docetic. He speaks of the form (*μορφή*) of the nature, for he is ready to emphasize the ontological meaning of the word form (*μορφή*), defining it as equal with the concept of substance (*οὐσία*).<sup>362</sup> The unity in person and authority of the divine Logos is still unbreakable, though the affection on the human nature had substantial dimensions. Theodoret refers to the "Only-begotten" when talks of Christ's human life with death, resurrection and the second coming, and says that Jesus is not any other Son than the Only-begotten Son.<sup>363</sup> In the mystery of incarnation, it was possible that the Ruler Christ himself came ontologically as a full man, while he preserved his former properties in his divine nature. In this connection, Theodoret refers to John's saying that "he came and his own did not recognize him".<sup>364</sup> As a man, he was entirely a creature like all human beings, having one being with them.<sup>365</sup>

Theodoret defines the divine authority by saying that the Ruler Christ was styled (*ἐχρημάτισεν*) in the bloodline of David for assuming the human nature of David's bloodline (*καὶ τοῦ Δαβὶδ υἱὸς ἐχρημάτισεν, ὡς ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν*

<sup>361</sup> *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 573. Trans. Hill, 71

<sup>362</sup> "So, let us reason this way: if the form (*μορφή*) of God means the substance (*οὐσία*) of God, then the form (*μορφή*) of a slave means the substance (*οὐσία*) of a slave". *Ad Phil.*, PG 82, 573. Trans. Hill, 71.

<sup>363</sup> "οὔτε μὴν ἕτερος υἱὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς παρὰ τὸν μονογενῆ Υἱόν· ἀλλ' ὁ αὐτὸς μὲν ἔστιν, ἔπαθε δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἀνέστη ὡς ἄνθρωπος", *Ad I Thes.*, PG 82, 633. Trans. Hill, 109.

<sup>364</sup> John. 1:11.

<sup>365</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 601. *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 685, 693, 695. Trans. Hill, 89, 142, 147.

φύσιν ἀναλαβών).<sup>366</sup> Theodoret uses the verb “to assume” (ἀναλαμβάνω) in order to describe the suddenness of the proses of incarnation. Thus, the time reference was fulfilled according to the divine plan and in assistance of the human nature. In the aorist tense, ‘to assume’ (ἀναλαβών) refers directly to the specific moment when God, according to his eternal plan, accepted something new into his person. It was the human form (ontologically) that God assimilated into himself. In Theodoret’s commentary on Romans, the assumption of the human nature carries the connotation of putting something new on.<sup>367</sup> In light of Theodoret’s ontological two-part conception, this should be interpreted as connoting that the assumption did not entail one nature taking the place of the other. Christ the Lord came to live and work as a man in his person, i.e. to practice the divine plan in his two natures, all the while preserving his immutability in his divinity.<sup>368</sup> He was God, but he was invested in the human nature (τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν περικειμενος φύσιν). He took the form (μορφή) of a slave, not only apparently but also substantially.<sup>369</sup> These formulations laid the ground for the emphasis on the subject nature of the divinity in Christ’s person, while not denying any of the human properties of Christ’s human nature.

Theodoret’s expressions of the inhumanation of the Ruler Christ did not contain, even in his later works, such as the commentaries on the Pauline letters, explicit *communicatio idiomatum* directly between the divinity and the humanity. The Ruler Christ assumed something new onto himself, and there was no mixing between the old and the new. Still, Theodoret is able to form *communicatio idiomatum* -type expressions by using his method of *communicatio onomaton*. For this method, he relies on scriptural interpretation of the Bible. As a tool to express his doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum*, Theodoretus can distance himself from standard theological expressions and instead appeal to the Biblical text with its mentioned names. He has defined the method of naming as working on ontological entities. He uses this method, *communicatio idiomatum*, in his Biblical commentary. According to this method, parts always represent the whole, and the whole represents the parts.

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<sup>366</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49. Trans. Hill, 45.

<sup>367</sup> “Before the cross and passion Christ the Lord did not seem to be God, not only to the other Jews but even to the apostles themselves: they were misled by human appearances...”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 51. Trans. Hill, 45.

<sup>368</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 216-217. Trans. Hill, 134.

<sup>369</sup> “Δήλον δὲ, ὡς οἶμαι, καὶ τοῖς ἁγαν αἰρετικοῖς, περὶ ποίαν φύσιν τὸ πάθος γεγένηται.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 97. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

The union made by naming is substantial to Theodoret.<sup>370</sup> Bound by expressions concerning Christ's divine plan, acts and qualities, Christ's whole person, with its two natures, is unavoidably present in all events. Through the human nature, the Ruler Christ became visible so that he could bring the glory of God to men. In former times, God had said, "let there be light".<sup>371</sup> Now, he illuminated the human mind, not with the former light but with his own actual light. He illuminated the minds of men so that they could perceive his glory through Christ himself, which means through the face of Jesus Christ.<sup>372</sup> Since the divine nature was invisible, its glory was perceivable only through humanity, which was assumed, shining with the divine light and flashes of lightning. The Ruler Christ revealed God in himself, for he was God from God. Theodoret distances himself from philosophical concepts of wisdom by man's reason only and turns his attention to the work of the Holy Spirit. The revelation of God in Christ was not only a matter of physical revelation. When the sun shares its light to everyone, those who have a weakness in their eyes are not able to perceive it. So is a man without right knowledge and faith unable to receive God's light through the Ruler Christ. Theodoret refers to mysteries when describing how the divine nature was invested in the human nature and not mixed in a manner that it could be fully seen in humanity. He argues that, in this life, the light of Christ always contains mysteries, while in the life to come the truth is revealed to everyone.<sup>373</sup> The human nature of Christ was capable of mediating God's divine light, glory and truth to every man, but not everyone has the right knowledge and faith to perceive it. At times, even the apostles, together with the Jews, were misled by Christ's human appearance and did not realise anything of God.<sup>374</sup>

<sup>370</sup> "Θεόπνευστον δὲ Γραφὴν τὴν πνευματικὴν ὠνόμασεν. Ἡ γὰρ τοῦ θεοῦ Πνεύματος χάρις διὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐφθέγγετο. Θεὸς τοίνυν τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, εἴπερ ἀληθῶς, κατὰ τὸν Ἀπόστολον, θεόπνευστος τοῦ Πνεύματος ἡ Γραφή. Διδάσκει δὲ καὶ τὰ εἶδη τῆς ὠφελείας. «Πρὸς διδασκαλίαν.» Ἀ γὰρ ἀγνοοῦμεν, ἐκεῖθεν μανθάνομεν", *Ad Tim.*, PG 82, 849. Trans. Hill, 245-246. See also Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 40-41 and *Incarnatione*, PG 75, 1472-1473. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán, 169

<sup>371</sup> Gen.1:3.

<sup>372</sup> Here, Theodoret naturally refers to Christ's person (πρόσωπον) and, at the same time, indicates that human properties are to be attributed under divine authority according to the divine plan.

<sup>373</sup> "Ὁ πάλαι, φησὶ, λόγῳ τοῦ φωτὸς τὴν φύσιν παραγαγὼν, καὶ εἰπὼν· «Γενηθήτω φῶς,» οὗτος νῦν οὐκ ἐκείνῳ, ἀλλὰ τῷ οἰκείῳ τὰς ἡμετέρας διανοίας κατηύγασεν, ὥστε αὐτοῦ τὴν δόξαν δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ κατιδεῖν· τὸ δὲ, ἐν προσώπῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ταύτην ἔχει τὴν διάνοιαν. Ἐπειδὴ ἡ θεία φύσις ἀόρατος, διὰ τῆς ληφθείσης ἀνθρωπότητος, τῷ θεῷ φωτὶ περιλαμπομένης ... Ἐδειξεν ὅτι τῷδε τῷ αἰῶνι ἡ πίστις περιώριστα· ἐκείνῳ γὰρ τῷ βίῳ γυμνὴ πᾶσιν ἡ ἀλήθεια δείκνυται. Ἐτύφλωσε δὲ τούτους ὁ Θεός, οὐκ αὐτὸς τὴν ἀπιστίαν ἐνθεῖς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν θεασάμενος, οὐκ εἶσεν ἰδεῖν τὰ κεκρυμμένα μυστήρια.", *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 400-401. Trans. Hill, 267-268.

<sup>374</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49-51. Trans. Hill, 45.

Theodoret's soteriological concept of the divine plan makes his doctrine of divine impassibility intact.<sup>375</sup> Theodoret understands God's Trinitarian nature (*οὐσία / φύσις*) to be eternal, immutable and impassible, for it is independent of all possible limitations of time and of any outside affections.<sup>376</sup> Divine properties are eternally the same with regard to the whole Trinity. However, God's *ἀπάθεια* does not mean that God is apathetic, immoveable and ignorant of man's life and experiences. On the contrary, he takes care of and loves people. God executes this warm love continually in his divine nature. He is involved in human lives and, according to his divine nature, he never ceases to be involved. In addition, he was ready, according to his divine plan, to assimilate his human nature ontologically in order to prepare the salvation of men.<sup>377</sup> Because of his "loving kind of" *ἀπάθεια*, God does not refuse to be involved in passible sacrifices.<sup>378</sup> According to Theodoret, love is the reason why God cannot be absent from human lives. In his *ἀπάθεια*, he is patient since he had to be longsuffering (*μακροθυμήσας*) in order to carry out his plan to prepare the remedy of salvation for people. God is not guided by negative emotions. He was insulted (*ὕβρισμενος*) by the fall, and yet he was willing to love.<sup>379</sup> God's love had to be free since he is not only able to love but he is also able to hate. However, God's hatred is concealed in the punishment to come. He does not possess all human emotions for he does not lose his control and he does not practice his hatred with passion, yet the passions are present in God's nature. This definition in Theodoret's doctrine does not refute God's eternal, immutable and impassible being. It confirms that it is God who masters everything and is not affected by anything.<sup>380</sup>

In Theodoret's soteriological conception, there are two reasons for Christ's real humanity. On the one hand, the human nature is mutable and it is capable of visible

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<sup>375</sup> B.E. Daley has paid special attention to the centrality of the divine plan (*οἰκονόμια*) in the theological presentation of all the Fathers. He writes, "through the course of the next five centuries, amid struggles to understand this set of paradoxes more richly and to affirm them without lessening their power, representatives of the Christian 'mainstream' came to be convinced more and more that the mystery of redemption, worked by God's plan in time, is itself the mystery of the person of Christ, understood in all its universal significance." Daley 2007, 11.

<sup>376</sup> See chapter 3.4. The eternal divine nature cannot be absent from human lives, for it is eternal and essential love. See also *Trinitate*, PG 75, 1188. Trans. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 137.

<sup>377</sup> Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 32-33.

<sup>378</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 63-65.

<sup>379</sup> "Καὶ τὴν ἀγαθότητα τὴν οἰκείαν ἔδειξεν ὁ Θεὸς, ἐπὶ πλεῖστον μακροθυμήσας τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παρανομοῦσι, καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ δὴλῶν πεποιήκεν ἅπασιν.", *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 412. Trans. Hill, 273-274.

<sup>380</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 61. Trans. Hill, 51.

suffering, mediating God's wisdom and possessing all human qualities required to execute the divine plan. On the other hand, in order to satisfy God, Christ had to be a human being with a human nature, not a divine being with a divine nature, who would sacrifice himself to save all humankind. Through these expressions, Theodoret makes it clear that the Ruler Christ, in his human nature, was undeniably a man like other men, and for that reason he could save mankind. In his human nature, he could take his place in human time. He naturally had the birth of a man. To express God as man in his human nature, Theodoret attributes to Christ the exact same desires as man has: Christ ate, drank, slept, suffered and experienced all human feelings. In his human nature, he was also circumcised like a man. God had promised to Abraham that through his offspring God would bless the nations. It should be noted that this prophecy was given concerning the human nature.<sup>381</sup> Abraham, the patriarch himself, accepted the sign of circumcision along with his household. Accordingly, it was necessary for the Saviour to have this sign too. The Saviour was Abraham's offspring according to the flesh, and he communicated the blessing to the nations so that they received the sign of kinship and that the realization of the divine promise was clearly revealed.<sup>382</sup> Both the passions and the resurrection of Christ the Lord took place in his human nature. The divine nature was immune to suffering, and the Ruler Christ would have been unharmed in the passion without the human nature. According to the divine plan, it was only in the human nature that Christ had the possibility to realize salvation. He endured suffering for the sake of man's sins in order to pay man's debt and, consequently, so that his resurrection might lead to the common resurrection.<sup>383</sup>

Theodoret guides the reader to understand the special position of Christ's human nature in comparison to all other human natures through the following definition: the Ruler Christ had "the same kind of human nature" as men have. However, in order to be able to execute the divine plan, the human nature did not have "the same kind of mindset" as men have. The presence of the divine nature has profound effects on the

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<sup>381</sup> "Ἐκείνων, φησὶ, οἱ πατριάρχαι πατέρες· πρὸς ἐκείνους αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι γεγέννηται· οἱ ἐκείνων προφηταὶ τὰ κοινὰ προεθέσπισαν ἀγαθὰ· ἐξ ἐκείνων κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστὸς· ἐξ ἐκείνων οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῆς οἰκουμένης οἱ κήρυκες· δι' ἐκείνων διενεμήθη τὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος δῶρα", *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 216-217. Trans. Hill, 134.

<sup>382</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49-51. Trans. Hill, 45, 130.

<sup>383</sup> "Τὸ μέντοι, Ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπειον εἴρηκεν· ἥ γὰρ ἔπαθε, ταύτη καὶ ἐγήγερται· τῆς δὲ σαρκὸς τὸ πάθος, οὐ τῆς ἀπαθοῦς θεότητος.", *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 93-95. Trans. Hill, 69.

human nature all the time. All other men have “the mindset of the flesh”, which means that their passions have affected hostility and war against God. Theodoret sees that Christ’s human nature was an essential part of the divine plan and, accordingly, was guided by divinity all the time in the context of this plan. The *Only-begotten Word of God* became man and destroyed sin in the human flesh. The authority of the divine nature in these expressions comes near to the Alexandrian concept of the complete dominance of the divinity in Christ. Theodoret stresses that the Christ fulfilled all righteousness while incurring no blame from sin. The body of the Ruler Christ was free of death, but like a sinner he accepted the death of sinners. He brought charge against sin’s injustice in handing over to death a body that was not in itself subject to death. He had not committed any sin and still accepted death. The Ruler Christ underwent the suffering of the cross, owing to the natural mortality of the body (τοῦ σταυροῦ τὸ πάθος ὑπέμεινε διὰ τὴν θνητὴν τοῦ σώματος φύσιν, ἀλλὰ ζῆ καὶ ζωὴ ἐστὶν ὡς Θεὸς καὶ Θεοῦ Υἱός.), but not having the natural mortality of the body. He became a ransom for those who are justly held in death’s grip.<sup>384</sup>

The Divine nature reveals himself in the flesh. In his commentaries on the Pauline letters, Theodoret does not emphasize the independence of the human nature but the power and presence of the divine nature. The human nature was assumed by the divine nature and was kept free from sins. The human nature was justified in Spirit.<sup>385</sup> The Ruler Christ, in person, put on the nature of Adam and preserved it innocent of any sin. Theodoret contends that the divine nature prevails over the passions and desires in Christ so that they all serve a good purpose. Theodoret’s anthropological conception of the soul giving good guidance to the desires of the body is evident in his Christology. The divine nature, like the soul of a good man, guided the human nature in proper manner. It permitted human desires and protected from evil. It is possible to see Neo-Platonic conceptions in Theodoret’s description of how the divine nature donates divine life to Christ’s humanity.<sup>386</sup> In the same way,

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<sup>384</sup> “τὴν γὰρ αὐτὴν ἔχων φύσιν ἡμῖν, τὴν αὐτὴν οὐκ ἔσχε ἡμῖν γνώμην.”, *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 128-132. Trans. Hill, 88-89. *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 456. Trans. Hill, 296.

<sup>385</sup> “Τὴν γὰρ ἀνθρωπεῖαν φύσιν ἀνελιφῶς, ἐλευθέραν ταύτην ἀμαρτημάτων ἐφύλαξεν”, *Ad I Tim.*, PG 82, 809-812 Trans. Hill, 220.

<sup>386</sup> Plotinus stated that the ultimate goal of the good guidance of needs and demands is to have virtues. He says that the solution of the good guidance is in understanding the virtues and what each of them teaches to give. Every man should learn to work in this way compiling them together as every several needs in the same time demand. He should reach to loftier principles and new standards. And when a

with divine assistance, it would be possible for anyone to assemble the riches of virtue.<sup>387</sup>

The Ruler Christ in person also had free will and he volunteered to suffer.<sup>388</sup> The human nature also possessed free will. Christ the Lord, in his human nature, could have avoided the death, but he accepted it according to the divine plan.<sup>389</sup> This act contained an extraordinary degree of love since God and the Son of God accepted death not for the sake of the righteous but for the sake of sinners.<sup>390</sup> He became a man, accepted the Passion and received the resurrection.<sup>391</sup> The Ruler Christ received the Passion in his human nature. He offered his own body (σῶμα), his own blood (αἷμα) and himself (εαυτόν) as a kind of ransom for man.<sup>392</sup>

In spite of the presence of the divine nature in Christ's suffering, Theodoret defines suffering as exclusively concerning the human nature. The suffering was in the flesh, not of the divinity, which is immune to suffering. Theodoret asserts that it is clear in his view, and even to heretics, which nature was involved in the Passion.<sup>393</sup> The fact that Theodoret does not attribute the Passion to the divine nature does not indicate the divinity's absence from the Passion. When speaking of human bodies and souls, which belong together and are all the time present, Theodoret presents a dualistic concept and attributes the passions and death only to the body. The souls may lose their freedom and be enslaved to the passions<sup>394</sup>, but they remain immortal. It is in

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man manages to do this he will no longer live his human life in better way but he takes up another life that of the God's. Plotinus 1926, 50.

<sup>387</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 60. *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 421-423. Trans. Hill, 50, 279.

<sup>388</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 771-772. Trans. Hill, 188.

<sup>389</sup> *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 404-407. Trans. Hill, 270.

<sup>390</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 145. Trans. Hill, 97.

<sup>391</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 165-168. Trans. Hill, 108.

<sup>392</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84, 200, 201. Trans. Hill, 64, 125, 126.

<sup>393</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG, 93-96. Trans. Hill, 69, 71.

<sup>394</sup> By saying that the souls may lose their freedom and be enslaved to the passions, Theodoret applies the Stoic view of the ideal stage of the soul to be free of emotions. According to Knuuttila, Chrysippus regarded emotions as voluntary acts that one can unlearn. Knuuttila 2004, 55, 62. See also *De Hippocratis et Platonis 1978-84*, 4.7, 12-14. Seneca suggested that a man's anger rises in three stages. The first motion of anger is involuntary, the second one is also involuntary but leads to consideration. The third stage can be overcome, for it is fulfilled via judgment and ends with judgment. It is an affection that may be overruled by reason. Seneca *Morals*, 311. However, Theodoret also might describe the soul as guiding different desires of the body and sometimes even nourishing them in purpose. *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 124-125. Trans. Hill, 86.

accordance with the notion that the mental centre of Christ the Lord can preserve its immortality in death.<sup>395</sup>

In the resurrection of the Ruler Christ, the positions of his two natures were clearly defined. The divine nature as God was the one who raised Christ from the dead, and the human nature was the one which was raised. It is possible to see here both the *communication idiomatum* between the natures and their co-operation in maintaining their properties in the process. This co-operation made the message of resurrection applicable to all men. Theodoret interprets Paul's text on the resurrection:

"They ought to realise, however, that the divine apostle in this text has written nothing about the divinity of the Only-begotten: in an exhortation to belief in the resurrection of the flesh, he endeavored to demonstrate its resurrection from the Lord's resurrection, it is clear, that his confirmation arises from like applied to like. That was his reason for referring to him as firstfruits of those fallen asleep, calling him a human being and by the comparison with Adam bringing out the common resurrection happening through him, so that after showing the resurrection of the one of the same nature he might convince the opponents to believe that all human beings will share in the same resurrection."<sup>396</sup>

For a soteriological reason, and for divine immutability, the purpose of human nature was to die and rise. Yet, this does not exclude divinity from the process. In the person, Christ the Lord was involved in every moment, and the two natures were in co-operation.<sup>397</sup> Man's share in the resurrection comes through the work of the divine Trinity. Theodoret refers to Paul when he concludes that, before long, man's body will be immortal and that it will be proven superior to the passions, which are now causing disturbance. The God of all himself will do this, who now generously provides the pledge of the Spirit. In Rom 8:11, Theodoret interprets Paul to be teaching about the one nature of divinity. Paul taught of the Holy Spirit belonging to

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<sup>395</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 125-128. Trans. Hill, 87.

<sup>396</sup> "Ἔδει δὲ αὐτοὺς συνιδεῖν, ὥς οὐδὲν ὁ θεὸς Ἀπόστολος ἐν τῷδε τῷ χωρίῳ περὶ τῆς τοῦ Μονογενοῦς θεότητος γέγραφε. Τῇ γὰρ ἀναστάσει τῆς σαρκὸς πιστεύειν παρεγγυῶν, ἀπὸ τῆς Δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐπειράθη δεῖξαι τὴν ταύτης ἀνάστασιν. Δῆλον δὲ ὡς τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον βεβαιοῦται. Διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαρχὴν αὐτὸν τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἐκάλεσε, καὶ ἄνθρωπον προσηγόρευσε, καὶ τῇ παραθέσει τῶν κατὰ τὸν Ἀδὰμ ἔδειξε δι' αὐτοῦ τὴν κοινὴν ἐσομένην νάστασιν· ἵνα τοῦ ὁμοφυοῦς τὴν ἀνάστασιν δείξας, πείσῃ πιστεῦσαι τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας, ὡς ἅπαντες ἄνθρωποι τῆς αὐτῆς μεθέξουσιν ἀναστάσεως." *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 357-359. Trans. Hill, 229.

<sup>397</sup> "Προσῆκει τοίνυν εἰδέναι ὡς δύο τοῦ Δεσπότης Χριστοῦ αἱ φύσεις· καὶ ὅτι ποτὲ μὲναὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπείας ἢ θείας προσαγορεύει Γραφή, ποτὲ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς θείας. Κἂν γὰρ Θεὸν εἴπῃ, οὐκ ἀρνεῖται τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα· κἂν ἄνθρωπον ὀνομάσῃ, συνομολογεῖ τὴν θεότητα." *ibid.*



God and to Christ. The Biblical promises constantly express this involvement. God's promises to mankind are many. He promises the resurrection from the dead, the incorruptibility of the body, a neverending life and the kingdom of heaven. These promises have come true when God supplied everything through the only-begotten son (*Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα ὁ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς Υἱοῦ κεχορήγηκεν*). Theodoret does not use the title "First born" to separate the human nature as another subject or another son from the person of the "Only-begotten".<sup>398</sup>

After the passion (the resurrection), Christ the Lord made his human body incorruptible and immortal.<sup>399</sup> Christ the Lord ascended and took his seat at the right hand of the God, which was done in his human nature. As God, he already possessed an eternal throne and the kingdom that is without beginning or end. The human nature brought to the picture the possibility to be involved in time. Christ could be anointed to a new stage as a man. He received, in the human nature, what he already had in his divine nature. Here is the second explicit expression of *communicatio idiomatum* in Theodoret's Christology. The divine nature donates all his properties to the human nature.<sup>400</sup>

The human nature of the Ruler Christ is adored. Through his human body, he had first taken the form of the lowliness of man so that the human body would be conformed to the body of his glory. This is the body of the Son, since the divine nature is invisible. The visible body of Christ is also adored. His identical nature to that of God's guaranteed him authority in his divine nature, but anointing and exaltation gave him authority in his human nature. The nature taken from man shared the same honour as the nature that had taken it. Instead of any difference in received adoration, the unseen divinity is adored through the visible nature.<sup>401</sup>

<sup>398</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 132, 384. Trans. Hill, 90, 259.

<sup>399</sup> "Λελύσθαι γὰρ τῷ Δεσποτικῷ θανάτῳ μεμαθηκότες τὸν θάνατον, οὐδένα λοιπὸν ἀνθρώπων θνητὸν ἐπιστάμεθα. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστὸς παθητὸν εἶχε τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὸ πάθος ἄφθαρτον τοῦτο πεποίηκε καὶ ἀθάνατον.", *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 410-413. Trans. Hill, 273.

<sup>400</sup> *Ad Hebr.* PG 82, 688. Trans. Hill, 143.

<sup>401</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 141-142. Trans. Hill, 95. "ἡ κοινωνία τῆς ἐξουσίας συνέζευκτο. Τὸ δὲ τὴν ληφθεῖσαν ἐξ ἡμῶν φύσιν τῆς αὐτῆς τῷ λαβόντι μετέχειν τιμῆς, ὥστε μηδεμίαν φαίνεσθαι διαφορὰν προσκυνήσεως, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ὁρωμένης φύσεως τὴν ἀόρατον προσκυνεῖσθαι θεότητα, τοῦτο παντὸς ἐπέκεινα θαύματος.", *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 516-517. Trans. Hill, 37.

The holiness of God spreads to people through his human nature. The Ruler Christ, in his human nature, is “the first holy batch and through him the whole lump is [holy], too”. This is comparable to Abraham being called the holy root, while the Jews are the recipients of the riches of that holy root.<sup>402</sup> God’s providence channels to the world through Christ’s human nature. The Ruler Christ is not only the creator of everything, but he also exercises providence for his creation. He guides creation, and through his wisdom and power it stands firm. He is the head of the Church. The Ruler Christ, in his humanity, is the head of mankind as well, and, accordingly, he as the head is the same being as a man. He is the one who joins the heavenly things to the earthly. Even if Christ’s human nature received exaltation, the lowness of Christ continues through his followers. He makes both their disobedience at all times and their subjection in the last times as his own.<sup>403</sup> The sign of his body is present in the Holy Communion. It is the realization of the type of Passover. Christ himself opened the door to the saving mystery. His body and blood were shared with apostles and even the betrayer. When the Christ comes to the world for the second time, there will be no need for these signs, for his body will be evidently revealed, again. Through this, Theodoret expresses that the human nature of Christ the Lord will remain eternally.<sup>404</sup>

Theodoret also contends that Christ is the head of every man, but applies this principle only to believers (*πιστευόντων*). What causes the division between the believers and other people is that they are “called to [a] different kind of union”, and Christ is “styled to be in the union” in his human nature. This unifying enotation works substantially in both directions. The believers are called the body of Christ (*Σῶμα γὰρ αὐτοῦ προσαγορευόμεθα*), and Christ is styled (*χρηματίζει*) as their head in his human nature. The head must be of the same people (*ὁμοφύλον*)<sup>405</sup> as the body. By their nature, Christ and the believers are one as human beings, but by their calling and style, they have a different kind of oneness, for all people are not involved in everything. This special kind of oneness with the believers is not a nominal but a substantial oneness. Theodoret compares this with the oneness of God and of the Son of God. The Father is styled as the head of Christ. This indicates oneness in their

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<sup>402</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 177-179. Trans. Hill, 113.

<sup>403</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 360. Trans. Hill, 230.

<sup>404</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 600-602. Trans. Hill, 88-89. *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 316-317. Trans. Hill, 207.

<sup>405</sup> *Ὁμοφύλον* (*ὁμοῦ, φύλον*) means “of the same race”, “of the same people” or “of the same stock”.

relationship, though they already possessed oneness in being called the Father and the Son. They also had to be of the same type, and the union is fulfilled in Christ's divine nature.<sup>406</sup>

Christ the Lord had to be present in human life in order to execute his eternal merciful and divine plan. He was the real subject in passible events, which supports his impassibility. In addition, all of the deeds against attribute to the Christ re to attributed to his human nature. The divine presence in human life does not disappear, though Christ the Lord is still the head of all believers. The presence affects reality in a wider sense since it has effects on all people. Even if Christ, in his human nature, is not the head of everyone, all people are favoured by his presence. He is everywhere in substance. In support of this interpretation, Theodoret also refers to Paul's saying in Acts, written by Luke. Theodoret asserts that "in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Theodoret continues to define the divine presence in human life by interpreting the notion "that God may be all in all".<sup>407</sup> He argues that Christ has an uncircumscribed nature, and in him all men live, move and have their being. The presence is thus also defined between Christ's divine nature and the human nature of all people. Theodoret defines the presence of Christ and of his believers as different. He says that, as far as Christ's good pleasure (Christ's good pleasure is his absolute presence in man's life) is concerned, he is not in everything, for he takes pleasure only in those who fear him and in those who do good and hope for his mercy. He has taken their condition completely as his own. Yet, even in them, he is not absolutely all in all, since no one can avoid uncleanness. Christ will not completely be in the believers until the final subjection when he is "all in them". At that time, in the future life, corruption will come to an end, mortality will be moved away and no sin will work in them. At that time, they will be subjected under Christ, and Christ will be subjected to God. In this subjection, the divine presence will be without any limits. In this context, Theodoret refers to the impassibility that comes to all believers. At the same moment, the passions of men will also come to an end and be completely eliminated.<sup>408</sup> According to the divine plan, God possesses divine impassibility for eternity, for all suffering will be taken away from the human nature in the final deification.

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<sup>406</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 312. Trans. Hill, 204.

<sup>407</sup> I Cor. 15:29

<sup>408</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 360-363. Trans. Hill, 230-231.

## 5.2. The Passible Human Nature Was Dependent on the Presence of the Impassible Divine Nature – Anthropological Argumentation by the *Free Will of Man*

The original Antiochian Christology of “two natures” necessitates an independent human nature with a body and a soul in Christ. In order to understand Theodoret’s position regarding the relationship between the human nature and the divine nature, it is necessary to analyse his understanding on the free will of human nature in more detail. If the human nature of Christ is defined as having the same properties as the human nature in general, these properties are to be noted when defining the position of human nature in Christ.

Commenting on the letter to the Romans, Theodoret insists on man’s free will to make choices. He attributes unlimited freedom to all men to choose between good and evil. They also have the capability to practice their choices.<sup>409</sup> God has always furnished human nature with a range of benefits, even though they were not meant to force man to obey God. God only gave mankind free will to choose their position regarding God’s will and promises. Theodoret abandons the idea that God’s promises inevitably force all appointed people under their influence. Some of the appointed become children of the promise and some do not. Theodoret takes an example from the promises given to the people of Israel. Some Israelites were not worthy of receiving the good things that were promised to them. In support of this,

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<sup>409</sup> See *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 108, 152-160. Trans. Hill, 77, 99-104. Theodoret has a positive view of man and his abilities. He defends the free will of man and resists the concept of predestination, just as the eastern fathers of the church do. The Fathers interpreted that Paul made an essential shift against Christian free will. They contended that Paul rejected circumcision and many other habits of Jewish tradition. To Paul, grace was understood to be freedom and freedom was understood to be grace. The church Fathers, especially the Oriental ones, proceeded to defend man’s free will in a Pauline manner. They tried to make their view of the world comprehensive and preferred predestination as an unchristian Hellenistic production. One of the authorities of Theodoret, Gregory of Nyssa, developed the concept of humanity in accordance with the Eastern conception of a man’s free will. He stressed the unity in man, teaching the close union of the soul and the body. He thought that the whole man was a picture of God, *imago Dei*. The most divine properties of man are the elements concerning his qualities of being and living. These elements are power, wisdom and freedom. In the western part of the church, the view of man developed in another direction. Augustine had a pessimistic view of human capabilities and opportunities to use free will in his choices. In his theology, the traditional Orthodox concept of a man’s goodness and divine originality was overshadowed by the emphasis on original sin. Munkki Serafim, *Vapaus – Johdatus mysteeriin*, 20-26. Another nuance in Theodoret’s expression is his implication of the power of *grace* over man’s own abilities. An example of this is the case of Samson, who was a sinner and still had a great gift of the Spirit. *On Oct.* 2, 347. In addition, all men share one nature but not equal knowledge. This is due to different gifts of the Spirit. *On Dan.*, 3.

he cites the Apostle Paul, who did not accept that the unworthy were simply predestined to be outside the faith but who still prayed for change. Theodoret concludes that there was always a real opportunity for change. Paul was distressed, and he prayed to be alienated from God, if only his alienation would call some Israelites to salvation. Theodoret interprets all promises to be addressed to everyone in Israel, not only to some, even if some of them were in opposition (*τούτων ἀντιλεγόντων*) to the promises and refused (*οὐ βουλομένων*) to reap the harvest of salvation. Yet, the promises were valid (*τάληθές*) and available at all times.<sup>410</sup>

Theodoret also refutes the alternative, that the birth of man would cause any predestination against free will. No one is, according to his birth, either among the children of promise or outside of them. The sons of Abraham had different mothers, as did the sons of Jacob. Yet that was not the reason for the division of faithfulness that took place among them. This is proven also through Biblical examples in which the division may occur even if the children have the same parents. The sons of Isaac had one and the same mother and father, yet one was dear to God (*ὁ Θεοφιλῆς*) and the other unworthy of divine care (*τῆς θείας κηδεμονίας*). In short, God loved Jacob and hated Esau. In this interpretation, Theodoret, in accordance with Paul, purports that God simply foresaw their dispositions beforehand. However, as a whole, Theodoret is inclined to emphasize the free will of man more than Paul does. The content of what God foresees in human lives is expressed in different ways. Paul, in his text, says that God had in his mind his own purpose of election and wanted to continue it (*ἵνα ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ Θεοῦ μένη*<sup>411</sup>). Theodoret explains that God foresaw the purpose and the election that pertained to these men (*Προηγόρευσε δὲ, τὴν τούτων*<sup>412</sup> *πρόθεσιν προμαθόν*), and after that God wanted to be just and sustain their purpose.<sup>413</sup>

Theodoret also prefers to emphasize that the human body originates from God's creation. The body is always good, and there is not any evil in it. The power of sin does not originate in man's members (*οὔτε μὴν τὰ μέλη ἡμῶν ἐνήργει τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*).<sup>414</sup> He

<sup>410</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 152-160. Trans. Hill, 99-104.

<sup>411</sup> Rom. 9:11-12.

<sup>412</sup> See plural genitive.

<sup>413</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 153. Trans. Hill, 100-101.

<sup>414</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 115. Trans. Hill, 81.

clearly states that the body is always capable of doing good work and worshipping God, but it needs to be guided by the soul (εὖ καὶ καλῶς ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς κυβερνούμενον, τῷ Θεῷ λειτουργεῖν) in “a fit and proper manner”. All parts of the body prove to be weapons of righteousness when the soul is so disposed, and conversely, they may turn into weapons of sin when the soul embraces the power of sin. The inclination of our souls in the wrong direction achieves the effect of sin through our members. The result is that we bear fruit for death. The rule of sin is possible only over those who are willing to be ruled. All people have the free will to choose, and it is not the body that deserves accusation but the free will, if the free will is evil (ἡ κακῶς γνωμῇ)<sup>415</sup> and gives evil guidance. The movement and disquiet of the passions are naturally hidden inside of man, whereas the performance of forbidden things is not natural and depends on free will. The purpose of the Law is to appeal to the free will and have an effect on the soul. The Law teaches what is evil and instils the hatred of evil in the soul. Yet Theodoret, according to his concept of the grace of the divine plan, argues that eternal life is still always the gift of God. Even if one practiced the highest degree of righteousness, the everlasting good would be given not as wages but as a gift.<sup>416</sup>

The body of man became mortal at the transgression of the commandment by the first people. The first people also felt the effect of the passions (παθήματα) in their bodies. Theodoret expresses these emotions with the connotation of suffering. However, he also derives the positive value of desires (ἐπιθυμίας) from the concept of the passions. After the effect of the passions, the body needs desires for its nourishment and procreation.<sup>417</sup> These are the desires that have promoted agriculture

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<sup>415</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 109-111. Trans. Hill, 77-79. See also how Pásztori-Kupán, based on *De Incarnatione*, expresses the role of the rational soul as “the substantial component” of what the author (Theodoret) calls ‘human nature’. Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 34-36.

<sup>416</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 109-115, 121-124. Trans. Hill, 77-79, 81, 85.

<sup>417</sup> In the *Phaedo*, Plato also was inclined to locate emotions and desires in the body, not so much in the reason of man. Plato did not see anything positive in the desires and passions of the body ( *Phaedo* 66b-67a) in his early ascetism. In the *Republic* and in some other middle dialogues, Plato treats desires and emotions not as the movement of the body, but as the movement of the soul, and his attitude towards emotions is slightly different from that found in the *Phaedo*. Knuuttila 2004, 7. *Phaedo* 1889, 15-16. See also Fortenbaugh’s assessment of the change in Plato’s thought, in Fortenbaugh’s study of *Aristotle on Emotions*. Fortenbaugh 1975, 9, 23, 31. The fact that Theodoret, following Plato’s view in *Phaedo*, suggests that the passions belong to the body, over which the soul is responsible, makes it easier for him to avoid the concept of two persons in Christ in his Christology. Plato’s psychological model in the *Republic* has been criticised by some authors for being a homuncular theory. The different parts of the soul are seen as little persons (*homunculae*) within a person. Knuuttila 2004, 9.

and other trades. Where the desires are lacking, nothing functions. Desire is a useful force in man's religious life as well. It is responsible for our practice of virtue, and it produces in us the longing for God.<sup>418</sup> A man must use the gifted desires moderately (*συμμετρία*)<sup>419</sup> for the excess (*ἀμετρία*) of them produces intemperance (*ἀκολασία*), all kinds of improper behaviour and even crimes. Theodoret describes this moderation as a diametrical process in which good balance is to be sought. It is like heating a very cold object with a hot object or, on the contrary, tempering a hot object with a cold one. When it comes to controlling the desires, Theodoret assesses a man's mind (*νοῦς*) is in charge of the process. In creation, God instilled in people two kinds of passions that are opposed to one another. They are to be balanced with each other. Theodoret uses the expression of the governing mind of man instead of the governing soul. The mind is in charge of the balance (*επετῆσε γὰρ αυτοῖς τὸν νοῦν*). God works like the proper mind when helping people. He puts hatred against the excess of desires. In another case in turn, the excess of hatred must be balanced with desire.<sup>420</sup> Theodoret, as Augustine on the western side, suggested that the Law is the counterforce for desires.<sup>421</sup> He brings out his Neo-Platonic heritage.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 121-124. Trans. Hill, 85. Epicurus also suggested that the desires are necessary in *The Letter to Monoeceus*: "We must also reflect that of desires some are natural, others are groundless; and that of the natural some are necessary as well as natural, and some natural only. And of the necessary desires some are necessary if we are to be happy, some if the body is to be rid of uneasiness, some if we are even to live. He who has a clear and certain understanding of these things will direct every preference and aversion toward securing health of body and tranquillity of mind, seeing that this is the sum and end of a happy life". Epicurus LM, 1.

<sup>419</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 124. Trans Hill, 85. Theodoret's term *συμμετρία* has the very same meaning as Middle-Platonic term *μετριοπάθεια* (moderation in the emotions). See Alcinous' and Clement's use of *μετριοπάθεια* in Knuuttila 2004, 88, 118.

<sup>420</sup> Martha Nussbaum notes that Plato expressed positive views of the passions in *Phaedrus*. Though he was critical to bodily pleasures and appetites, he first suggested that erotic appetite at the least is possibly seen to involve a complex and selective response of the entire soul. Second, the worse horse needs not only continuous control, but also good feeding. Third, the information of the passions may prove necessary to the best insight. Fourth, the intellectual element is not enough for the good apprehension of truth and good choices. Nussbaum 1986, 221. Knuuttila 2004, 13.

<sup>421</sup> Augustine asserts that all three philosophical traditions, the Platonic, Aristotelian and Stoic, had the same conception of emotions, even if the Stoics were generally said to have a different one from the two others. According to Augustine, the difference was, as Cicero put it, only in the words. All of them agreed that the emotions, as disturbances of the soul, had to be resisted so that they would not prevail against reason. In practice, Stoics only call actual feelings in a different manner from the others. Augustine writes in *The City of God*: "Among the philosophers there are two opinions about these mental emotions, which the Greeks call *pathe*, while some of our own writers, such as Cicero, call them *perturbations*, some *affections*, and some, to render the Greek word more accurately, *passions*. Some say that even the wise man is subject to these perturbations, though moderated and controlled by reason, which imposes laws upon them, and so restrains them within necessary bounds. This is the opinion of the Platonists and Aristotelians; for Aristotle was Plato's disciple, and the founder of the Peripatetic school. But others, as the Stoics, are of the opinion that the wise man is not subjected to these perturbations. But Cicero shows in his book *De Finibus* that the Stoics are here at variance with the Platonists and Peripatetics rather in words than in reality; for the Stoics decline to

Theodoret speaks of the Law with the connotation of a distressed mind. Consequently, it was natural to think that positive desire, which can produce pleasure, was a counterforce for the law.<sup>423</sup> Theodoret does not define the term *συμμετρία* (symmetry) of *παθῆ* (suffering) as a step at a higher stage of *ἀπάθεια* (insensibility to suffering), as was generally suggested by contemporary philosophers. Theodoret follows in the footsteps of Clement of Alexandria, for whom the moderation of the emotions was only the elementary ethical level that all Christians should strive for.<sup>424</sup>

Theodoret also applies the metaphor of a charioteer and horses, which was familiar from Plato. Plato, however, used the metaphor with reference to the forces of the soul, while Theodoret applies it to the forces of the body. Theodoret compares the balancing of the forces in the body to the co-operation between a charioteer and ponies. The charioteer is like the mind, making sure that the ponies, as passions in the body, carry equal burdens.<sup>425</sup> Theodoret suggests the possibility that man is able to dominate his desires and emotions completely.<sup>426</sup>

In *Eranistes*, Theodoret again applied this diametrical method, this time for curing the doctrinal defects of men. He mentions the strengths and weaknesses of different types of heresies, and appoints them different kinds of remedies. He suggests

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apply the term ‘goods’ to external and bodily because they reckon that the only good is virtue, the art of living well, and this exists only in the mind.” *City of God*, 9.4. Knuuttila 2004, 154.

<sup>422</sup> Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism, suggested the view of moderation of the passions. Plotinus thought that bodily emotions belong to the lower level of the body with the trace of soul. The soul is aware of them, but they do not belong to the soul. Knuuttila 2004, 6, 99.

<sup>423</sup> Knuuttila posits that Plotinus also employed Plato’s concept of the tripartite soul and applied it in an Aristotelian way in which emotions were accompanied with distress and pleasure. Knuuttila 2004, 98. Plotinus *Ethical T.*, 60-62.

<sup>424</sup> However, when it comes to the ideal perfection of Christians, Clement says that more is demanded, *Stromata* 5.11 (67.2-4); 6.9. (74.1.); 6.13 (105.1). See Knuuttila 2004, 118. Rütger 1949, 50-102 and Völker 1952, 183-194, 524-540.

<sup>425</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 124-125. Trans. Hill, 86. In the *Phaedrus* 246a-256e, Plato described the reasoning part of the immortal soul as the charioteer, the spirited part of the soul as the better horse and the appetitive part of the soul as the worse horse. The better horse has no inclination to step aside, while much work is needed to habituate the worse horse to move straight. Still, it is better to take care of the worse horse than to try to extirpate it. In good guidance, its power adds to the whole. Knuuttila 2004, 13. Perseus Digital Library.

<sup>426</sup> Here, Theodoret follows the Platonic and Stoic conception against Aristotle, who asserted that the contingent things in human life are not wholly under our control. See Knuuttila 2004, 26, Nussbaum 1986, 318, Nussbaum 1994, 78 and Striker 1996, 286-302. Even though Aristotle does not suggest that inner feelings are wholly controllable, he still holds feelings and emotional responses as good sources of information for rational decisions. The rhetorician must pay attention to different kinds of emotional expectations. (*Rhet.* 1.10). Aristotle *Rhetoric*, 16-18.



persuading heretics to accept only what they lack in their conception. He handles them as if they had caused an unbalanced stage and needed to be balanced with their opposites.<sup>427</sup>

Theodoret proceeds with the eastern concept of man capable of all good, and he presents an exceptionally positive view of the emotions. In the good guidance of a proper mind or a soul, the emotions of man are useful, promoting even spiritual virtues. Theodoret supports the Stoic conception of successive movements of the passions. The process of aiming for a symmetric stage of desires allows a moderate amount of passions. The moderate amount can be seen to be just the first movement of the passions (*προπάθεια*). It is the duty of man to refute the second movement, which in Theodoret's expression is excess (*ἀμετρία*).<sup>428</sup>

However, the human body is under death because of sin, but the human soul is immortal. Only through Christ the Lord can man receive immortality of the body and an existence free from the passions of hardship and grief. Through Christ, there can be life without hostility and sin. This balance will be entirely gifted in the life to come, but people can enjoy the grace of the all Holy Spirit already in this life. In the battle array against excessive passions, people are not alone. With divine assistance they are able to prevail over their passions. Without grace, people are beset by the passions.<sup>429</sup>

Theodoret's anthropological doctrine also contains typological thinking. The first human being, Adam, had a human nature that was the type of the man Christ the Lord. Theodoret describes how the original sin had changed Adam's nature, although Adam had received the gift of reason in creation. By reason, he is capable of evaluating good and evil. It would have been impossible for this kind of nature to live without any law since the abilities of man's reason to understand the purpose of the law and the consequences of obeying it would have been donated in vain.

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<sup>427</sup> Theodoret *Eranistes*, Trans. Ettlinger, 94-96. Of course, this method is brilliant for defending Antiochian two-nature Christology. The balance occurs at the optimal point when a theologian has confessed the two natures to be equally and fully existing.

<sup>428</sup> Origen refers to the Stoic concept of *προπάθεια*, claiming that even Jesus had the beginnings of sadness and fear but not the emotions themselves. *Comm. ser. in Matth*, 90, 92.

<sup>429</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG, 127-128. Trans. Hill, 87.

Consequently, God gave the single commandment to exercise human reason and to instruct man to obey the limits of service. The law that God imposed was not difficult to practice but actually very easy to observe. God permitted the enjoyment of all plants, forbidding the consumption of one only. However, Adam (the type of Christ) was deceived, and he chose to break the law. It was God, the lawgiver, who had linked the threat of punishment and the commandment together. The first man became subject to the rule of death as well as his offspring. As a result, this kind of human nature is in need of food, drink, clothing, habitation and diverse skills. People have to use these things that often stimulate the passions to intemperance, which generates sin. Theodore presents his concept of predestination through circumstances in this context. Following Paul, he asserts that both sin and death are inherited by the human race. However, Theodore claims that everyone is under death for his own sins, not for those of the first parents. By this, Theodore insures that the archetype of Adam, the Christ, was able to offer a totally pure sacrifice since the human nature of Christ did not have the guilt of other human beings.<sup>430</sup>

After the fall, men still had their reason. As human beings, even if no one is present during their actions, people are ashamed and feel guilty for their crimes. In spite of this skill to consider the situation and make right decisions, sin prevailed in the world. However, Theodore brings attention to people who objected to even the worst sins, people like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek and the Patriarchs. Then came the Law, and sin had its full force in the Law. Law reached its end when the Saviour came. Death reigned from Adam to Christ the Lord. Adam was the type of Christ. He, as the first human being, sinned and fell under the norm of death, and all people followed the first parents. Christ the Lord, who did not follow his type Adam, fulfilled extreme righteousness. He destroyed the power of death and, being the first to rise from the dead, brought the entire human race back to life. A human being, Christ the Lord, overthrew death. Following Paul, Theodore stresses that the Ruler Christ saved all humankind in one person. This is in accordance with his conception of one subject in Christ the Lord. Theodore refers to the divine plan by stating that the atonement took place because of God's lovingkindness. Through one person,

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<sup>430</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 100, 120. Trans. Hill, 72, 83.

who had to be a man, people can receive the gifts of God. They will prevail over death and share with Christ in the indestructible kingdom and eternal life.<sup>431</sup>

Human bodies were under the power of death. The reign of this power ceased at the death of the body. He who has died is acquitted of sin. After the resurrection, the body becomes imperishable and immortal, and grace reigns in it. The passions will come to an end, and sin will have no place. Theodoret interprets Paul's text<sup>432</sup> on baptism in a manner in which he defines the positions of the natures of Christ in the Passion and the resurrection. Baptism represents a type of the Lord's death. In baptism, man has a share with Christ in both death and resurrection. Theodoret does not forget to express his Christological structure in this context: the divine nature is the glory of God, which raised Christ from the dead. The human nature was the one that was raised. Christ speaks of the human nature in the Gospels saying, "destroy this temple, and in three days I shall raise it up".<sup>433</sup> The resurrection can be seen as a co-operation of the Trinity. The object of the resurrection is not the Divinity but, unambiguously, a man. Christ had experienced the Passion as a man. He died once, accepting death for our sins. He cannot die anymore. The plan is completed. The properties of human nature are changed in baptism. The change occurs now because Christ has an immortal body.<sup>434</sup>

While Theodoret asserted the free will of men, he still held that the divine authority was over Christ's human nature and that it protected humanity from falling into sin. At first glance, it seems that Christ does not have the same kind of humanity as mankind, i.e. assumed humanity. However, Theodoret makes an enlightened addition concerning human nature in general. He interprets sin to be a derivation of bad control of the desires and contends that all men have an equal opportunity for divine control over their desires. He says that this balance will be entirely gifted in the life to come, but that people may enjoy the grace of the all Holy Spirit already in this life. In this light, the human nature of Christ is not different from the common nature of humanity in the world. They both are in need of assistance. Theodoret draws support for his concept of the free will of man from many Biblical examples.

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<sup>431</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 100-104, 120. Trans. Hill, 72-74, 83.

<sup>432</sup> Rom. 6:4.

<sup>433</sup> John. 2:19.

<sup>434</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 105. Trans. Hill, 75-76.

According to Theodoret's anthropological principles, there is no place for a limited will of Christ's human nature.

However, the standpoints from which to understand the free will of Christ's human nature and the free will of all men differ. The "mindset" of Christ differs from that of other men. The presence of the divine nature is never without effects. It constantly has profound effects on the human nature of Christ. All other men have "the mindset of the flesh", which means that their passions have affected hostility and war against God. Theodoret sees Christ's human nature as an essential part of the divine plan and, accordingly, that it was guided by divinity all the time within the context of this plan. The Only Begotten, the Word of God, became a man and destroyed sin in human flesh. The authority of the divine nature in these expressions comes near to the Alexandrian concept of the dominance of the divinity in Christ. Christ the Lord, in his person, fulfilled all righteousness while incurring no blame from sin. The body of the Ruler Christ was free of death, but, like a sinner, he accepted the death of sinners. He brought charge against sin's injustice in handing over to death a body that was not in itself subject to death. He had not committed any sin and still accepted death. The Ruler Christ underwent the suffering of the cross, owing to the natural mortality of the body (τοῦ σταυροῦ τὸ πάθος ὑπέμεινε διὰ τὴν θνητὴν τοῦ σώματος φύσιν), and yet did not possess the natural mortality of the body. He became a ransom for those who are justly caught in death's grip.<sup>435</sup>

In *The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul*, Theodoret unanimously expresses his positive view of man's free will and man's abilities to control himself. However, in his Christological presentation, he adds that this is achieved by the good assistance of the divine God. In his early presentation of *De incarnatione*, he has emphasised the total independence of human nature and described it as free to make its own choices. During his debates with the Alexandrian λόγος - σάρξ theologians, Theodoret used expressions that, in a way, emphasize unity. Theodoret uses the word 'body' (τὸ σῶμα) in connection to the word 'human nature', and he describes that which was assumed more often as the human nature (τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν) rather than man (ὁ ἄνθρωπος). This change enables another means to express divine

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<sup>435</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 128-132. Trans. Hill, 88-89. *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 456. Trans. Hill, 296.

authority over the humanity in Christ, while not denying the free will of man in general.

The very same intention is evident in Theodoret's emphasis on the subject nature of the person of Christ the Lord in the act of salvation. Christ, following his type Adam, fulfilled extreme righteousness. He destroyed the power of death and, being the first to rise from the dead, brought the entire human race back to life. As a human being, Christ the Lord overthrew death. Following Paul, Theodoret emphasizes that the Ruler Christ, in one person, saved all humankind. This is in accordance with his conception of one subject in Christ the Lord. The one subject had to be present in all passible events since without the presence, there is no rationale in former expressions of the necessary support (being present) of the divine nature to the human nature. Theodoret refers again to the divine plan by expressing that atonement was given because of God's lovingkindness. Through one person, which had to be a man, people can receive the gifts of God. They will prevail over death and share with Christ in the indestructible kingdom and eternal life.<sup>436</sup> The free will of man is an undeniable concept for Theodoret in his anthropology. Man is capable of doing good. Still there is corruption in the "mindset" of men. Only the person of Christ the Lord can have the "mindset" of God and possess good control over his humanity so as to be very capable of all good. The divine nature was not in danger of being affected because its subject nature, and the free will of Christ's human nature, were under the control of God's "mindset". However, the divine nature had to be present in human life in order to be able to give assistance with a sound "mindset". Deification must begin in the human life of all men, even in the Ruler Christ concerning his very humanity.

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<sup>436</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 100-104, 120. Trans. Hill, 72-74, 83.

### **5.3. The Whole Person of Christ was Undivided and had to be Present in Human Passibility – Exegetical Argumentation by *Communicatio Onomaton***

Theodoret contends for the divine presence in Christ's human life by using his method of the communication of names. He has harnessed Biblical names to carry essential messages in doctrinal definings. The Biblical names are never to him anything nominal but substantial. What he really means needs to be clarified by his own definition of the method of naming. By referring to names, he says more than what was usually done. He did this in order to avoid arguments while presenting his real conceptions.

In his commentary on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret consistently gives Biblical names a crucial place in the very structure of his Christology. They bear the essence of their owners, and they form ontological unions with each other. These names communicate with each other, and this communication has effects on their interpretation. These same effects are permanently valuable and useful for interpretation in other contexts also. Through Christological names, Theodoret indicates which aspect of Christology he aims to underline, either the duality or the unity. The names of Christ's person refer to unity, and the names of the natures of Christ refer to duality. Every Christological name that indicates Christ's person, in Theodoret's conception, refers to the full unity of the natures in Christ. According to the communication of names, a unifying name includes all its parts. The union of the parts is ontological, and they necessarily are present in the event of Christ's life. In The Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul, Theodoret chose to use mainly the title Ruler Christ (ὁ Χριστός Δεσπότης) in order to express the unifying person of Christ. The parts of this title may also appear separately. In accordance with his exegetical practice of the communication of names, it is natural that they also separately have the authority to represent the whole person of Christ. However, Theodoret does not limit himself by using only these special names, but he operates with titles as well. These he also takes directly from Paul's text. The notion that the title the Ruler Christ would always be understood to concern the entire unifying person with both natures is explicitly validated by Theodoret himself. He presents two doctrinal statements to explain the meaning of the title the Ruler Christ. First, he asserts in a comment on Hebrews that the Ruler Christ is both God and man, and both "high and

low things” must be applied to him in order to indicate these two natures.<sup>437</sup> “The low and high things” necessarily refer to the human and the divine experiences, including the passibility and the impassibility of Christ. Both the passibility and the impassibility of his natures need to be applied to the Ruler Christ. When Theodoret uses the title of the Ruler Christ, he implies the full presence of the whole person of Christ.

Second, when commenting on Romans, Theodoret asserts that the Ruler Christ is continuously involved in God’s divine plan.<sup>438</sup> In this context he confirms the basic Christological structure of two natures in one Person and explains the connection to God’s divine plan. Since God executes the plan, both the human and the divine experiences are necessarily included in God. From the viewpoint of the divine plan, there is no contradiction regarding the aspect of time between the two natures of the person of Christ. Even though the human nature was assumed at the incarnation and not in pre-existence,<sup>439</sup> the human nature was already known in God’s mind and in his plan in pre-existence. As the divine plan is immutable like God himself, and as the grace of God rules as it wishes, carrying out the plan, the assumption of the human nature was only a matter of revelation of the plan.

Theodoret portrays the divine presence in human life also through the names of God. In Eph 1.17-18, Theodoret interprets the titles of God to reflect the two natures and two kinds of experiences of Christ. He refers to Paul’s statement that “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation through knowledge of him, the eyes of your mind enlightened”.<sup>440</sup> After repeating Paul’s prayer to plead for spiritual wisdom, Theodoret proceeds to examine the names in the text. He analyzes the phrase “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory”. He asserts that Paul has used here a necessary distinction in the

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<sup>437</sup> “Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ καὶ Θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστὸς, ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ θεωρεῖται προσώπῳ, ἀναγκαίως καὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ, περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγειν εἰς δῆλωσιν τῶν δύο φύσεων ἀναγκάζεται... “ *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 697, Trans. Hill, 149.

<sup>438</sup> “Εἰ τοίνυν ἡ κατὰ τὸν Δεσπότην Χριστὸν οἰκονομία εἰς ἔργον ἤνεγκε τὸν τοῦ νόμου σκοπὸν, οὐ κατηγορίας ἄξιος, ἀλλ’ εὐφημίας, ὁ νόμος... “ *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 129, Trans Hill, 88.

<sup>439</sup> In *Eranistes*, Theodoret also stresses that there was only one divine nature in pre-existence. “Then there were not two natures before the union but one and only one. For if the divinity has a pre-existence, and the humanity does not coexist, because it was formed after the angel’s greeting, and the union was joined together by the formation.” *Eranistes*, Trans. Ettlinger 110-111.

<sup>440</sup> Eph. 1:17-18.

names. Paul called the first person of the Trinity both God and Father. This distinction is not important as an expression of God's person, but it is so as an expression of the Son's person. The two names of God are reflections of Christ's being as God and his being as man. God is here God to the Lord Jesus Christ as a man, and God is Father to the Lord Jesus Christ as God. The formulation of the name of God indicates God's divine presence equally within both natures of Christ.<sup>441</sup>

Theodoret refutes the possibility that the communication of Christ's different names in the text would indicate anything else than the substantial unity of the person even though the natures have their different properties. In Rom 1.2-4, Paul writes concerning Christ: "he [God] promised beforehand through his inspired authors in Holy Scriptures about his Son, who was of David's line according to the flesh, appointed Son of God through power, according to a Spirit of holiness, from resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord". Theodoret interprets that Christ is the Word-God incarnated (*ὁ ἐνανθρωπήσας Θεὸς λόγος*) and that he is the Son in two respects. According to the divinity, he is the Son of God (*υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*), and according to the flesh, he is the son of David (*υἱὸς τοῦ Δαβὶδ*). As the Son of God, he was begotten of God by nature before the ages, and as the son of David, he was styled (*ἐχρημάτισεν*) the son for assuming the human nature of David's line. To style does not mean being nominally something but being substantially something. Theodoret points to the addition of "according to the flesh", which he says implies that Christ truly remains the Son of God according to the divinity and a man according to the humanity. This kind of addition is never needed in reference to other human beings, who really are only what they seem to be. From the standpoint of divinity, Christ remains the Son of God eternally. From the standpoint of humanity, Christ remains a man in David's line. Theodoret refutes adoptionism, excluding the possibility that the human nature would become the Son of God through God's grace. He summarizes that Christ is, at the same time, both a human being and eternal God. In the same person, Christ have two kinds of appearances. First, he was styled as a human being in David's line, and second, he was appointed and assigned to be the Son of God, also in his human nature, through the power exercised by the Holy Spirit after his resurrection from the dead. In addition, the appearance of divine power was shown at times through the miracles that were performed by Christ,

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<sup>441</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 516. Trans. Hill, 36-37.



although they were not enough to reveal the whole power of the divinity and to convince people of God's full presence in the human being.<sup>442</sup>

With an Antiochian emphases, Theodoret advises that one should always understand that there are two natures of the Ruler Christ. He also necessitates the unconditional presence of both natures in every event of the life of Jesus Christ based on Biblical nomenclature. This must be necessitated, he claims, even if the text does not say it explicitly. The divine Scriptures speak of the Ruler Christ sometimes with regard to the divinity and in some cases with regard to the humanity. In any circumstances, the Scriptures do not deny the one if the other is being expressed. According to Theodoret's method of the communication of names, the entire title of the Ruler Christ is referred to even if only one part of it is named as a subject. Theodoret's definition confirms that there is one subject and one Person in Christ the Lord. All expressions are to be addressed to him since both natures are present at all times. The expressions may stress either his human or divine properties, but they do not deny the opposite nature.<sup>443</sup>

In his interpretation of Phil 2.5-11, Theodoret concentrates on defending the divine presence in all of Christ's experiences while refuting heretical conceptions. He executes this task by defending both the dualistic structure and the unity of the person of Christ. Theodoret describes three kinds of dangers in heresy. First, it is common for heretics not to accept the whole presence of the two natures throughout all of Christ's life. They blaspheme Christ's divinity (*τὴν θεότητα τοῦ Μονογενοῦς βλασφημοῦντας*) or they deny his humanity (*τοὺς ἀρνούμενους τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα*). Second, they confuse the persons (*τοὺς τὰς ὑποστάσεις συγχέοντας*) of the Trinity. Theodoret does not make a distinction here between Christ's being as a man with a perfect soul and body or the transcendence of the divine nature, but leaves more space for expressions of unity in the person of Christ. In any case, the name of the person is the title to which all sayings regarding both natures are to be addressed. The person of the Ruler Christ is not additional or temporal, for it is always the

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<sup>442</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 48-50. Trans. Hill, 44-46.

<sup>443</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 357-360. Trans. Hill, 229-230.

eternal second Person of the Trinity. Theodoret also explains the kenosis of Christ from this standpoint.<sup>444</sup> Paul writes:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Who, though being in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a thing to be grasped. Instead, he emptied himself by taking the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of human beings, and being found to have human appearance. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, death by crucifixion. Hence, God also exalted him, and conferred on him a name above every name. So, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, of those in heaven, on earth and under the earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.<sup>445</sup>

Theodoret names the heretics that are refuted with Paul's text. In his commentary, he identifies the convictions of Sabellius, Photinus, Marcellus and Paul of Samosata in addition to the convictions of the Nicaean heresies of Arius and his successor Eunomius.<sup>446</sup> Theodoret intentionally singles out only these heresies for refutation since they specifically threatened the clear understanding on the unity of the Trinity and the unity of the Christ. Theodoret does not mention, for example, the Alexandrian theologians, whom he had met as opponents of his own stress on the duality of Christ. Instead, he seems to support them and concentrates on defending the unity of Christ. The Ruler Christ is the one who glorifies the Father and is indivisible. Theodoret, even before the council of Chalcedon, defends the Chalcedonian conception of "one person in all" and interprets Paul to refute all duality of the person in the Ruler Christ (*τῶν προσώπων ὑποδείκνυς τῇν δυάδα*).

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<sup>444</sup> Theodoret uses here the term "*ὑπόστασις*" to refer to the person. The term is here in Trinitarian and not in Christological use. It refers to the different persons of Trinity, but not in a heretical way to two different persons in Christ. *Ad Phil.* PG 82, 572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>445</sup> Phil. 2:5-11. See also *Ad Phil.* PG 82, 569, 572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>446</sup> Theodoret sees here the conviction of Sabellius, Photinus, Marcellus and Paul of Samosata, who had brought forth the duality of the two persons of the Trinity. PG 82, 572. See translation of Hill in Theodoret 2001 d,71. Sabellius (a third century priest and theologian who most likely worked in Rome) taught that God was indivisible, with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being three modes or manifestations of one divine Person. A Sabellian modalist would say that the One God successively revealed Himself to a man throughout time as the Father in Creation, as the Son in Redemption and as the Spirit in Sanctification and Regeneration. (Because of this focus on God's revelation of himself to man, Modalism is often confused with "Economic Trinitarianism"). Marcellus (Marcellus of Ancyra [died c. 374 C.E.] was a Bishop of Ancyra and one of the bishops present at the Council of Ancyra and the First Council of Nicaea ) was a strong opponent of Arianism but was accused of adopting the opposite extreme of modified Sabellianism. Photinus (died 376) was a theologian and bishop of Sirmium in Pannonia and was a student of Marcellus. Paul of Samosata (lived from 200 to 275 AD) was Bishop of Antioch from 260 to 268. He was a believer in monarchianism. He emphasized the oneness of God, that Jesus was born a mere man, and that at his baptism he was infused with the divine Logos. This teaching anticipated adoptionist Christology.

Theodoret unambiguously states that he does not support the concepts of “two persons” or “two Sons” in his Christology.<sup>447</sup>

The Ruler Christ, however, had different names, which indicated his positions in different stages of Salvation history. When speaking of the pre-existent Christ, he is called “God the Word” (ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος), which indicates that he is God and God by his divine nature (Θεὸς γὰρ ὦν καὶ φύσει Θεοῦ) with full equality with God the Father. To Theodoret, being in the form of God (μορφῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ) is a synonym of having the same substance with God (οὐσία τοῦ Θεοῦ). The presence of God is in every stage of Christ’s life. Theodoret identifies an anti-Arian statement in Paul’s text,<sup>448</sup> saying that it is crystal clear that those who call him creature and slave inflict dishonour on the one who begot him. Following Paul, he asserts the full divinity of Christ. Nevertheless, he equally defends the humanity of Christ as well. God the Word put aside his worth and chose extreme lowliness by taking on human form. Being in the form (μορφῇ) of a slave is not, to Theodoret, an expression of modalism or Monarchianism. On the contrary, it means having the substance (οὐσία) of a slave. Theodoret uses the verb ‘assume’ when speaking of the incarnation. He does not use the polemical expression “assumed a man” but rather his opponents’ more moderate expression “assumed human nature”.<sup>449</sup> Through the method of *communicatio onomaton*, Theodoret confirms his concept of God as the person of Christ the Lord and as being fully present in the human passibility of the Christ.<sup>450</sup> The deification on the ontological level is made possible by defining the unity in Christ in such a substantial way as Theodoret has done with *communicatio onomaton*.

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<sup>447</sup> *Ad Phil. PG* 82, 569, 572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>448</sup> *Phil.*2:11.

<sup>449</sup> *Ad Phil. PG* 82, 569, 572. Trans. Hill, 70-71.

<sup>450</sup> In the Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul, Theodoret gives great value to his method of communication of names. It is to him a way of expressing the structure of the Christological union of the natures in one person. It must be accepted that, to avoid disputed vocabulary in a tensional time of the Church, he employed this method as the special tool in Christological discussions. Unifying nomenclature is to him not anything nominal but substantial. When taking the point of view of his whole range of works, starting with his early productions of *De Trinitate* and *De Incarnatione*, it is hard to grasp his intention as fully understood. Clayton has come to the conclusion that it is not possible to find, according to Theodoret’s communication of names, anything to express *communicatio idiomatum* or to understand that the human properties would be addressed to the Word itself, not only to the nominal kind of πρόσωπον. See Clayton 2007, 285. Pásztori-Kupán has come to another evaluation by saying that the naming in Theodoret’s whole oeuvre does have an ontological dimension. See Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 40-42.

#### 5.4. The Real Presence of the Divine Nature in the Passion – Sacramental Argumentation

Theodoret unambiguously explicates the presence of the whole person of Christ in the Passion. Christ the Lord (ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός) experienced the cross and the Passion. Theodoret does not establish any limit to Christ's personal involvement in the Passion. He does not indicate that Christ was only in his humanity while suffering. On the contrary, he was God, even though he did not seem to be God. Theodoret says that "the appearance" was misleading both to the Jews and to the apostles, for he seemed to act only like a human. The people could see him eating, drinking, sleeping and growing weary in a human way. Theodoret constantly speaks of one person who also performed miracles, which did not sweep away human impressions, for in the same person he was David's son according to the flesh. Not until the time of the resurrection, ascension and coming of the all-holy Spirit did the believers come to know that he is God and God's only-begotten Son. Theodoret describes here the same person who had been the pre-existent God, going through the Passion to his own death, being both human and divine. Theodoret refers to Rom 8.32 in saying that "we should acknowledge, of course that the person of the Son is one".<sup>451</sup>

Theodoret contends for a clear personal presence of Christ in the Passion when saying that the Ruler Christ was fixed, "in his person", to the cross by the Jews.<sup>452</sup> In this connection, Theodoret emphasizes that Christ's two natures are always present in his person. He posits that the same is expressed in Paul's statement: "Jesus Christ is yesterday, today and for eternity the same".<sup>453</sup> The whole person is defined as eternal through the phrase 'for eternity', and the presence in human life is defined through the words "today" and "yesterday". The divine nature has its "eternity" and human nature has its "today" and "yesterday". Theodoret applied the same statement to support the duality in Christ. He asserted that limitations of time do not apply to

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<sup>451</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 49-52. Trans. Hill, 45- 46. Also in his doctrinal work *Eranistes*, Theodoret distanced himself from his predecessors by saying "when we speak about the person, we must make the properties of the natures common and attribute both types to Christ the Saviour". In *Eranistes*, he addressed the title "person" exclusively to one person of Christ, yet he paralleled his predecessors by referring to an independent man with the body and the rational soul in Christ. He attributed the suffering to Christ as a human being, while he describes God as remaining beyond suffering. Theodoret *Eranistes*, 118, 121, 187, Trans. Ettlinger.

<sup>452</sup> "Διδάσκων ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων τῷ σταυρῷ προσηλώθη". PG 82, 781A.

<sup>453</sup> Hebr. 13:8.

divine nature, and, consequently, the statement has to be divided to indicate the duality in Christ. When referring to Christ's suffering on the cross, he employs the statement to support the involvement of the two natures in the same person in the time of suffering.<sup>454</sup>

The presence of Christ as a whole was required to validate the victim offered for men. In his commentary on the First Letter to the Corinthians, Theodoret comments on Paul's statement in I Cor 6:20, "and you, not aware that you are not your own. You were brought at a price". The price was the death of the priceless victim, the Ruler Christ himself. The Lord's blood was the price paid for humankind, and now people belong to their Saviour.<sup>455</sup> Theodoret had proceeded to say that Christians preach the Lord's Passion and scorn the stupidity of those who do not realize the value of the victim, both Jews and Greeks.<sup>456</sup> In his opinion, the best possible theological discourse is Paul's presentation of these exact words (1 Cor 2:2) as an instruction on the incarnation, glorifying the Lord's Passion (*ἐπὶ τῷ Δεσποτικῷ σμερυννόμενος πάθει*)<sup>457</sup>. Theodoret perceives this same kind of definition of the subject of the Passion in all of Paul's statements concerning the sacraments. The Christian's share in the Lord himself (*κοινωνοῦμεν τῷ Δεσπότη*) is in the sacraments, in which Christians claim are the body and blood of Christ (*οὗ καὶ τὸ σῶμα εἶναι καὶ τὸ αἷμά φαμεν*), since all Christians partake of the one loaf.<sup>458</sup>

The presence of the divine nature in the Passion was necessary in order to complete the plan of God's love. Commenting on the Letter to Galatians, and following Paul, Theodoret emphasizes God's love and grace, which was indicated in Christ's suffering and wisdom. Sacrifice prevails over God's law. The Ruler Christ is the authoritative subject, and he accepts the suffering. Theodoret attributes to him the decision to accept and undergo the Passion. In Gal 1:3-4, Paul writes, "Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins". According to Theodoret, Paul shows here that the way of life according to the Law is incapable of freeing from sin. The Ruler Christ accepted death

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<sup>454</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 781. Trans. Hill, 194.

<sup>455</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 269. Trans. Hill, 180-181.

<sup>456</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 237. Trans. Hill, 163-164.

<sup>457</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 240. Trans. Hill, 165.

<sup>458</sup> *Ad I Cor.*, PG 82, 305. Trans. Hill, 201.

(καταδεζόμενον θάνατον) for the sake of man and released the people from the debt of their sins.<sup>459</sup> The reason that Christ the Lord accepted death for man's sake was that he might secure immortal life for people. The death was personally the Lord's death.<sup>460</sup> Paul writes in Gal 3.16-17,

Now, the promises were addressed to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, and to his offsprings, implying many, but implying one – and to his offspring, namely Christ. This is my point: the law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not annul a covenant ratified by God with a view to Christ and have the effect of cancelling the promise.<sup>461</sup>

Theodoret contends that, according to this passage, Abraham's offspring refers to the Ruler Christ in person (τούτο δὲ τὸ σπέρμα αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Δεσπότης Χριστός), and through him the promise took effect, and the nations attained the blessing. Theodoret describes the person of the Ruler Christ as one member in the line of offspring of Abraham according to humanity and similarly as the one promised by God to be the Saviour.<sup>462</sup> The Law has been a custodian for people, freeing them from their former godlessness. It has tutored people in the knowledge of God. The Ruler Christ has also been a wise teacher. People may learn perfect lessons from him and obtain righteousness through faith. However, the ultimate benevolence from God is given by the suffering of the Ruler Christ.<sup>463</sup> The Ruler Christ could have avoided all suffering. However, he made the choice and suffered for the benefit of all. He rejoiced in the salvation of human beings, although he himself had to endure suffering. He is now seated with the Father who begot him.<sup>464</sup>

Theodoret defines the Ruler Christ's presence in the death and passion as concrete. He takes notes from Paul's text in I Thess 4:14. Paul discusses the concept of death. The Ruler Christ died and the death of other men only signifies that they have fallen asleep. Theodoret perceives a great wisdom in Paul's description of death when it comes to Christology. Theodoret understands Paul to be refuting the misunderstandings that Christ did not assume the flesh (τῆς σαρκός τὴν ἀναλήψιν) or

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<sup>459</sup> *Ad Gal.*, PG 82, 461 Trans. Hill, 2.

<sup>460</sup> *Ad Gal.*, PG 82, 476. Trans. Hill, 9-10.

<sup>461</sup> *Ad Gal.*, PG 82, 480. Trans. Hill, 12.

<sup>462</sup> *Ad Gal.*, PG 82, 480. Trans. Hill, 12.

<sup>463</sup> *Ad Gal.*, PG 82, 484. Trans. Hill, 14.

<sup>464</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 770-772. Trans. Hill, 188.

that he was only apparently present in human life and death. This wisdom is hidden in the notion that there is no metaphor to describe Christ's death. When it comes to other people, the metaphor of sleep is used to comfort grieving people in their sorrow, not to make death seem unreal to them. Theodoret sees deep spiritual wisdom in Paul's text in how it avoids confusing expressions concerning the reality of Christ's human experiences. Christ's Passion and death were real personal events, as will also be his second coming. The Ruler Christ's participation in human experiences is not simply apparent.<sup>465</sup>

Theodoret confirms his conception of the real nature of Christ's divine presence in human suffering also by comparing it to the apparent partaking of the anti-Christ. He finds a contradiction in artificial features. He claims that the anti-Christ is a man by nature who only receives the Devil's activities in himself. The anti-Christ mimics the incarnation of the Ruler Christ, who has actually assumed the human nature (*τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀναλαβών*) in order to produce salvation. Theodoret obviously refers here to the communication of different natures in Christ. In Christ's inhumanation, there is ontological union, which in Theodoret's Christology is presented by *communicatio onomaton*. The Devil is not actually present and does not actually assume a human being, but rather selects (*ἐκεῖνος ἄνθρωπον ἐκλεξάμενος*) a human being who is capable of receiving all his activity and who will endeavour with his master (the Devil) to deceive all human beings.<sup>466</sup>

However, it is worth noting that Theodoret describes the divine presence in the sacrifices in a way that ascribes to the person of Christ different roles. However, he constantly tries to be careful not to narrow the presence of the whole subject in any way. Rather, he tries to make room for the two natures to be present, preserving their own properties. The one person of Christ is able to participate both in human and divine acts through these roles. In Rom 3:24, Paul writes: "whom God put forward as a mercy seat by his blood effective through faith". Theodoret processes this text and explains it with the Old Testament concept of the mercy seat.<sup>467</sup> In the old Covenant,

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<sup>465</sup> *Ad I Thes.*, 648. Trans. Hill, 117.

<sup>466</sup> *Ad II Thes.*, PG 82, 664. Trans. Hill, 128.

<sup>467</sup> God ordained through Moses, Exodus 25.10-22., to make a mercy seat of pure gold for ritualistic purpose. The mercy seat was an object that rested upon the Ark of the Covenant and was part of the

the “mercy seat” was a ritualistic object on top of the Ark, and in the new Covenant, it is the mercy seat of Christ. In the rituals of the old Covenant, God revealed his benevolence to the high priest when he ministered near the Ark of the Covenant. The blood of the victims was sprinkled at the Ark. When it comes to the new Covenant, The Ruler Christ is the true mercy seat while the first one is only a type. Theodoret unanimously attributes to the Ruler Christ two kinds of subject nature. He defines a two-fold presence of Christ in the sacrifices that came true even during the Old Covenant. Christ works in both divine and human acts.<sup>468</sup>

According to his divine nature, the Ruler Christ has the same authority and position as God. He has the power to give God’s responses through the mercy seat to the high priest and other people. The Ruler Christ is side by side with God, while at the same time Christ takes on human roles as well. As a man, Christ the Lord can take the place of both the high priest and the victim that is sacrificed for atonement. Crucial applications of the old type of the mercy seat to the new one are similar in two kinds of roles. The Ruler Christ carried out salvation in his divine role, while he also was in the role of the victim. Theodoret says that, instead of the blood of the animal victims, the Ruler Christ completed man’s salvation through his own blood (*ἐν τῷ οἰκέτρῳ αἵματι*), requiring only faith from mankind.<sup>469</sup>

Theodoret specifies the divine role of Christ by explaining how the Ruler Christ was the mental centre in Christ and executed the divine plan in his actions. Theodoret emphasizes that, even if the Ruler Christ had two natures, he always had the mindset of God, and he was ready to suffer for mankind according to his divine lovingkindness. Theodoret explains that God had the free will to choose and to accept death (*καταδέξασθαι θανάτον*) on behalf of sinners. As God, the Ruler Christ possessed the divine passions, for he loved people and was ready to offer himself as a victim to be sacrificed. Hereby, all people can learn divine lovingkindness. It was an extraordinary degree of love since God accepted the death not for the sake of the righteous but for the sake of sinners.<sup>470</sup> Believers are able to receive the forgiveness

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rituals of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, according to Leviticus 23.26-32. The term mercy seat also appears in the Pauline Letters.

<sup>468</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 64.

<sup>469</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84-85. Trans. Hill, 64.

<sup>470</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 145, 97. Trans. Hill, 96-97, 71.



of sins. The Ruler Christ also carried out his human role under the divine authority since the Ruler Christ offered his own body (σώμα), his own blood (αἷμα) and himself (ἑαυτὸν) as a ransom for man.<sup>471</sup> Again, the Ruler Christ works through his divine role in the resurrection. He was also raised from the dead, and people are to believe in him.<sup>472</sup> However, it was Christ himself, as the Son of God, who raised humanity from the dead.

The Ruler Christ continues his work in the church. When commenting on Eph 2:15-18, Theodoret describes the Ruler Christ as the unifying head of the body of believers, the members of which come both from among the Gentiles and the Jews. The same subject suffered, was put to death on the cross for the enmity and offered the perfect sacrifice. The Ruler Christ continues his work since it is he who calls the Gentiles who are far off and the Jews who are near. According to Theodoret, this resembles the Lords saying, “no one comes to the Father except through me”.<sup>473</sup> Christ the Lord leads men to the Father and grants them spiritual grace.<sup>474</sup> Both the involvement in the Passion and divine authority are expressed also in comments on Eph 5:25-28. Following Paul, Theodoret exhorts husbands to take care of their wives, being the followers of the Lord who takes care of the Church. He attributes both human and divine properties to the one subject of the Ruler Christ. The Ruler Christ accepted the church as his bride, for whom he did not refuse even to die in order to purify her and show her to be rid of every stain. He died as a man, but he purifies as God.<sup>475</sup> Theodoret refutes the division of the person of the Ruler Christ. There is one subject involved in every event. He confirms the unity of the one subject in Christ explicitly while commenting on Eph 4:10, “The one who descended is the same as he who ascended above all the heavens so as to fill all things”. Theodoret interprets this passage in the following manner:

It was not that one descended and another ascended; rather, to put it in a nutshell, he descended one way and ascended another way, descending bodiless but ascending with a body. Now, the descent does

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<sup>471</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 84, 200, 201. Trans. Hill, 64, 125, 126.

<sup>472</sup> *Ad Rom.*, PG 82, 115, 84. Trans. Hill, 81, 63-64.

<sup>473</sup> John. 14:6.

<sup>474</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 521. Trans. Hill, 39-40.

<sup>475</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 548. Trans. Hill, 52.

not imply any change in place: it only brings out the magnitude of the plan, that the Most High put up with such abasement.<sup>476</sup>

The Ruler Christ is present in the sacrifices given to the people by God with both of his natures. He is present in the entities, both visible and invisible ones. Both of the natures are required to make the sacrifice complete, but the divine authority and readiness to accept suffering for sinful men leads to the divine nature being involved in suffering with all possibilities. The deification of humanity demands divine authority and divine involvement in suffering. The next chapter will confirm the sacramental presence in Theodoret's use of typology.

### **5.5. The Divine Nature was not Affected in its Acceptance of a Vulnerable Presence in Sacrifice – Exegetical Argumentation by Typology**

Theodoret uses typological interpretation willingly when the text itself seems to encourage him to do so. A type (*τύπος*) is usually a thing or a person. Types always refer to important and original archetypes (*ἀρχῆτυπος*), which are also persons, events or realities. Chronologically, the types are usually prior to the archetypes in real time. Theodoret emphasizes that the type is not necessarily identical to the archetype in every characteristic (*χαρακτήρ*) or shape (*εἶδος*). For example, it is possible that types have opposite properties to their archetypes, such as being alive and dead, or being divine and human.<sup>477</sup> Theodoret seems to rely on the competence of typological interpretation when it comes to important doctrinal issues. Theodoret applies typology to serve his explanation of the transformation of bread and wine in Holy Communion. Theodoret says that the sacramental symbols, which he thinks are the types, do not lose the substance or properties that they had before their use as symbols. However, they are understood to have become similar to their archetypes of blood and wine. Accordingly, they are the objects of faith and worship because they are what they are believed to be. In this context, Theodoret provides an indispensable piece of information of how the types are to be interpreted. He instructs the following: “compare the image with the original, therefore, and you will see the

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<sup>476</sup> *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 533, 536. Trans. Hill, 46.

<sup>477</sup> Ettlinger 2003, 21.

similarity. It is for that the type must be like the reality”.<sup>478</sup> The fact that Theodoret also understands the Old and New Testaments to be consistent which each other opens the way for the typological interpretation of Christological issues all through the Bible.

Theodoret applies typological interpretation also when describing the impassibility of the divine nature. He takes the type from passages concerning the Old Testament mercy seat. In order to have enough source material, Theodoret refers also to the sacrifice that is ordained in the Num 19. In this passage, God gave instructions to Moses and Aaron concerning the sacrifice, and ordained the purification of water for people who were unclean. Since Theodoret does not explain the whole text, it is useful first to look at the context of the text to which he refers.<sup>479</sup>

This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke. And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face. And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times. And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn. And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer. Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even. And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even. And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin. (Num 19:2-9, KJV).

There were several materials involved in this sacrifice that Theodoret lists in his exegesis. He also appoints them to their position as types and archetypes. The water was a type of baptism, the blood of the brute beasts represented the saving blood, the heat of the hyssop is the grace of the divine Spirit, the scarlet wool stood for the new garment, “a piece of cedar” (being wood that does not rot) was “the impassible divinity” and the “ashes of a heifer” represented “the suffering of humanity”.

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<sup>478</sup> *Eranistes*, 133. Trans. Ettlinger.

<sup>479</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 744-755. Trans. Hill, 174-175, 203, (See also Hill’s note number 10 in Hebr 9. page 203).

Theodoret continues his instruction: “compare and see the similarities”. When comparing the types with the archetypes, the similarities are obvious, except in the relationship between a piece of cedar and the divine nature. First, the two kinds of waters were for purification, although in different purposes. Second, the two kinds of bloods were for the conciliating of God, although the victims were different. Third, the warmness of the hyssop and the grace of the divine Spirit originated from the sacrifices, although their purposes were differed. Fourth, the two pieces of garments were both connected to sacrifice, although they had different purposes: one to be destroyed and the other to be in use. Finally, the ashes of the heifer and the suffering of Christ’s humanity equally shared their cruel destiny, although they embodied different kinds of natures. To conclude, all these pairs had their differences and similarities, just as Theodoret defines the relationship between type and original. According to Theodoret, the similarities carry a message, but it is not so easy to find the message in the relationship between the cedar wood and the divine nature. This demands more attention.<sup>480</sup>

The piece of cedar wood was ordered to be taken and thrown into the fire with hyssop and scarlet. Theodoret said that the cedar was chosen as the type of its archetype, the divine impassibility. The reason why it is suitable is that it does not rot. Theodoret chose cedar as the material because it is durable in itself, yet he did not choose any material that would be impossible to burn like stone or bronze. He sees here the possibility for some kind of damage. The piece of cedar was thrown in the fire with the burning animal and, obviously, it would be affected in some way. According to this type, the divine nature can avoid damage, but in this special sacrifice it is put in the consuming fire and is at least temporally in great danger of being affected. The cedar wood was absolutely involved in the sacrifice. However, it was not intended to be the main victim of the sacrifice or to be destroyed. In his typological interpretation, Theodoret’s message seems to be quite tolerant of the idea that the divinity possesses the absolute capability of taking part in the Passion. First, Christ’s divine nature was completely involved in the Passion, experiencing everything that happened while not experiencing damage itself. Second, the main

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<sup>480</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 744-755. Trans. Hill, 174-175,

victim was the human nature, the body of Christ the Lord.<sup>481</sup> Theodoret demonstrates this actively passive involvement in discussing the humiliation (κενῶσις) of Christ as well. Even though he asserts that the divine nature was not in need of anything and did not lose anything in the incarnation, the divine nature still experienced (μὲτελελύθη) the presence of the need when the divine person seemed to be in need of assuming the human nature.<sup>482</sup> Divinity is presented as impassible in a passible way by typological exegesis. However, Theodoret leaves some questions open, obviously on purpose, in order to allow space for the mystery of the transcendent God.<sup>483</sup>

## 5.6. The Divine Nature Remains Impassible in the Union – Argumentation by Deification.

In Theodoret's Antiochian soteriology, the ultimate goal of salvation is deification (θέωσις), the process in which the Ruler Christ gifts his divine properties to his

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<sup>481</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 744-755. Trans. Hill, 174-175. There is an element of the very Platonic interpretation of pain here in Theodoret's typological exegesis. Plato suggested that the real feelings of pain and pleasure are experienced as the result of a right understanding of what is happening in one's body. The divine nature of Christ was aware of Christ's bodily movements, for the divine nature was involved in the same sacrifice while not itself being the sacrifice. Theodoret has the concept of *οἰκονόμια* in mind when forming his typological interpretation. Christ himself was with God in planning the sacrifice, and Christ himself decided to give his blood, body and all of himself in the Passion. To conclude, it could be said that the divine nature experienced the real agony, having a right understanding of bodily suffering. In this sense, accordingly, it was passible. However, the Platonic interpretation was not to deny the Passion concerning Christ's humanity and body. The actual awareness of the divine nature derives only from the physical conditions. Plato, in his work *Philebus* (*Phil.* 33d-34a, 43a-c), expresses his concept of bodily pains and pleasures systematically. He claims that the bodily process is not a pleasure or a pain in itself but that it must be perceived. One must be aware of these feelings. There is something taking place in the body of which one must be aware of in a special way to feel bodily pleasures or pains. Plato *Philebus*, 66-68, 92-93. Knuuttila 2004, 18. Nemesius of Emesa paralleled Plato and said that, when one feels bodily pain or pleasure, bodily change is one thing and the pleasure or pain associated with it is another. Bodily pleasure or pain is the psychic sensation of what is going on in the body. Nemesius's *De Natura Hominis*, 16, 73.21-74.7, 75.1-6. in Knuuttila 2004, 107. Porphyry has systematized Plotinus' Neo-Platonic remarks on the virtues (in the *Enneads* 1.2.). He came to the conclusion that man should specially apply himself to purificatory virtues. Man should believe that he can acquire them even in this life. However, *ἀπάθεια*, without emotional dispositions, seems to be possible only without the body. Knuuttila 2004, 103.

According to Plato, the bodily experiences are stored in the soul. With its awareness, the soul has different kinds of feelings for anticipating the experiences to come. *Philebus* 35e-36c. Plato *Philebus*, 72-74.

<sup>482</sup> *Ad II Cor.*, PG 82, 425. Trans. Hill, 280. It is possible to see Theodoret here addressing the need for the divine person in the time when the human nature was only to become assumed. He uses the name "Only begotten Son" to describe the one experiencing this need.

<sup>483</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 744-745. Trans. Hill, 174-175.

human nature and to mankind. According to Theodoret's presentation, this process takes place in two stages. First, Christ gives his divine properties to his own human nature and, after that, to the members of the Church.<sup>484</sup> The process of deification is closely linked to the method of *communicatio idiomatum* and to the concept of *ἀπάθεια*. In Theodoret's two-nature Christology, the deification of the human nature is briefly expressed when he states that, on the one hand, "the Ruler Christ as God is the maker of everything" and that as a man, on the other hand, "he is the inheritor of everything".<sup>485</sup> Theodoret describes the foundation of the deification of men by emphasizing that the Ruler Christ has always been "the first" among people. He is the one who has effects on others and is not affected by others in any way. According to the mystery of the divine plan, the Ruler Christ was "the first", and people have inherited his position, following "the first" one. This is the mystery that surpasses all human understanding and that allows believers to be the partakers of Christ's kingdom. The Ruler Christ was the first one beloved by God, and he himself is the loving Ruler (*φιλανθρωπὸς Δεσπότης*) of people. Theodoret contends that this process continues from man to man. Following Christ, people should make sure that love prevails within his Church.<sup>486</sup>

The Ruler Christ is the firstborn of all creation. This means that he was born first before the whole creation. This does not mean that he is the first creature among others. He is the first among them, however, having his origin not in creation but in begetting. That is to say, he himself must be the Creator. Theodoret notes Paul's statement<sup>487</sup> that the Christ was not the first created (*πρωτόκτιστον*) but the firstborn (*πρωτότοκον*).<sup>488</sup> Theodoret supports the concept of Christ's impassible divine nature, defining Christ as in a unique position for the creation, yet at the same time to be totally present as the firstborn of all creation. Theodoret also refers to the natural law that God and his will are known through creation because through the wisdom

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<sup>484</sup> Athanasios had already asserted that salvation is a man's participation in God's essence. The divine Logos has been revealed to humankind in the incarnation. The Logos did not only assume the special human nature of Christ but the common, universal human nature as well. The Antiochian school emphasized deification in the meaning of changing into the likeness of God (*homoiōsis theoi*). McGrath 1999, 446-447.

<sup>485</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 684- 685. Trans. Hill, 142. Theodoret also expressed his understanding of deification by comparing it to his gift of adopting men so that they may become his sons. *Divine Prov.*, 139-140. Trans. Thomas Halton.

<sup>486</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 596. Trans. Hill, 86.

<sup>487</sup> Col. 1:15.

<sup>488</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 597. Trans. Hill, 87-88.

and power of God his providence keeps all in existence. Commenting on Paul's words, Theodoret states:

Now, the fact that here the term *firstborn* means first, what follows teaches us: *He himself is before all*. He did not say, He was made before all, but *He is before all*. And, *in him, all things hold together*: He is not only creator of all things, but he exercises providence for what he made, he guides creation, and through his wisdom and power it stands firm.<sup>489</sup>

In the incarnation, the Ruler Christ effects creation for a second time, and crucially, effects human life, since humankind is deified by the divine act. Theodoret expresses this by saying that the Ruler Christ is, for the second time, the Creator, for he creates everything anew. Theodoret supports this statements with Biblical citations:

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation [...] to bring all things together in Christ [...] there will be a new heaven and a new earth [...] The old has gone - behold all has become new [...] This creation will be freed from the slavery of corruption for the freedom of the glory of the children of God.<sup>490</sup>

Theodoret regards the notion of the Ruler Christ as the Creator to be “the true doctrine of God”. Hereby he indicates that Trinitarian unity is the principle for understanding the involvement of the second Person of the Trinity in every stage of creation. Theodoret proceeds to describe, according to the divine plan, the deification of the Church (“to the Church for the reason that the divine gifts fill it”<sup>491</sup>). He notes that that the Ruler Christ was the firstborn of the dead and the head of the Church according to his humanity. Since Christ was called to be the head of the Church, and since the head is the same being as the body, he is similarly the same being as all human beings. Theodoret addresses a great privilege to the Church by its deification. Following Paul, he summarizes: “So that he may come to have first place in everything: as God, he is before all, and is with the Father; as man, he is the firstborn of the dead and head of the body”.<sup>492</sup> This deification forms the communal divine presence in the whole church. In this deification, God, with his divine nature, gifts his status of “being first,” which is not affected by the lower state of humanity.

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<sup>489</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 600. Trans. Hill, 88 (emphasis his).

<sup>490</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 600. Trans. Hill, 88.

<sup>491</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 601. Trans. Hill, 89.

<sup>492</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 601. Trans. Hill, 89.

According to the divine plan, the Ruler Christ was also involved in the Passion. He brought about our reconciliation by undergoing the saving Passion. He gave a great gift to men by shedding the blood and offering the sacrifice, according to Theodoret's expression, "for us". One part of deification took place here. Theodoret defines it as "he joined heavenly things to earthly". Theodoret gives the impression that the act of reconciliation involves communication between the properties by joining heavenly and human works in the saving Passion. He describes the closeness of heaven in the incarnation by referring to how the heavenly angels, who were alienated from people for their wickedness, were made familiar to them again in singing praises to God in their hearing during the incarnation.<sup>493</sup>

Deification contains the giving of more wisdom to men. By the divine works of love, people are able to receive knowledge that joins them to God. Formerly, people were given up to evil, wickedness and impiety, and they were utterly separated from the light of the knowledge of God. Man's relationship to God did not improve with the knowledge of the Law. It became well through Christ the Lord, who paid debt of all people so that they might be seen as worthy of the calling, rendered holy and free of every stain. Theodoret vividly describes the involvement of Christ the Lord in the Passion:<sup>494</sup>

For the sake of the Church, Christ the Lord accepted death, the ignominy of the cross, blows on the head, stripes on the back and everything else he endured; and the divine apostle likewise, for its sake put up with the many folds sufferings and gladly put up with them.<sup>495</sup>

Theodoret also describes the deification of men in light of the different honour of different natures. He takes an example from Christ's two natures and the angels. He says that, as God, the Ruler Christ is the maker of angels and Lord of them. However, as a man, he was less than the angels since he experienced death and the Passion, while angels are immortal. Afterwards, when he describes deification in ascension, he proposes that the Ruler Christ became, also in his human nature, superior to the angels. "He took his seat over every principality, authority, power,

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<sup>493</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 601. Trans. Hill, 89.

<sup>494</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 601. Trans. Hill, 89.

<sup>495</sup> *Ad Col.*, PG 82, 604. Trans. Hill, 90.



lordship and every name that is named”.<sup>496</sup> Theodoret especially stresses that this superiority of the new state of human nature will endure, “not only in this age, but also in the age to come”.<sup>497</sup> In his divine nature, the Ruler Christ possesses the sonship to Father eternally, but in his humanity he received the promise, given in the future tense, that God will be his Father in the incarnation.<sup>498</sup> Believers are also inheritors, but their deification is different because the bodies of the saints do not conform to the divinity. They do conform, however, to the bodies the Glory.<sup>499</sup> The divine nature remains immutable while the human nature receives great honour.

God’s impassibility in Theodoret’s Christological presentation is closely linked to the quality of the union (ἔνωσις) between the two natures of Christ. Passibility is present in the experiences of the human nature at all times, but is there so tight a union in Christ that passibility would pertain to the divine nature? In Theodoret’s soteriology, the ultimate goal of salvation is deification, the process by which the Ruler Christ gifts his divine properties, at first to his own human nature and, after that, to the members of the Church, “the first” among people. The union is be strengthened by deification, i.e. *communicatio idiomatum*. However, Theodoret does not give the impression that the divine nature is mutable in any way. The divine God is the one who affects others and is not affected in any way by them. Still, God prefers to make Christ the partaking subject of deification. The subject is named the person of Christ and called the Ruler Christ. Theodoret defines the Ruler Christ as the Creator in the incarnation, the second creation. It is he with two natures who create everything anew. Theodoret justifies his statements with many Biblical citations.

According to the divine plan, the Ruler Christ was subject to passibility. He suffered in his divine works of love. Through incarnation and his suffering, people are able to receive the higher status of being among “the first” and being ranked above the angels. They will experience it as a mystery since the “heavenly things are joined to

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<sup>496</sup> “Ἐκάθισε γὰρ ἐπάνω πάσης Ἀρχῆς, καὶ Ἐξουσίας, καὶ Δυνάμεως, καὶ Κυριότητος, καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου, οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι.”. *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 684. Trans. Hill, 141, see also Eph.1:21.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 684- 685. Trans. Hill, 142.

<sup>499</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 688. Trans. Hill, 143.

[the] earthly”. They will also receive knowledge that joins them to God. Theodoret presents two kinds of expressions to describe deification. They were formed in accordance with his theological development. On the one hand, people are educated by the right knowledge of knowing the loving deeds of Christ. On the other hand, deification is to perceive the authority of the divine nature and the communication of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*). The latter effects a new status and is able to gift new heavenly properties to men.

However, the person of Christ is always the owner of all properties in Christ. The Ruler Christ, in his person, is capable of having two kinds of properties, and what is revealed in the natures and shared between them is dependent on the Ruler Christ’s divine plan and decision. It is by his decision that his divine nature came to be present in human life when he assumed a human nature, making a union with it. In Theodoret’s presentation, in *The Commantary on the Pauline Letters*, it is Christ the Lord in person, not the Logos in his nature, who came into the world to be a man. In other words, Christ the Lord is the one who supports and deifies all things in the world by the Word of his power. He, in his very person, is the Maker and Creator of the ages, and, in addition, he came into these things and into these ages as a present being with no change in his divinity. Theodoret’s expressions imply that the divinity took a limited and smaller shape so that the kenosis may occur. A crucial point in his argumentation is that the kenosis took place by God’s own will and decision, which is why the divinity was not affected by other entities in any way. As God, he is eternally everywhere, but as a man, he came into the one flesh by his own decision. He took on limitation, for he was also a man. Furthermore, Theodoret expresses this limitation when addressing the status of the Son in incarnation. Christ became “the firstborn” among many brethren though he was “the Only-begotten” of God. Christ the Lord accepted this “partly shared status” with his unique status of the Son of God. However, he remained honoured by the angels when he became a man.<sup>500</sup> The Passion was possible because the person of Christ now had a nature that was passible according to his universal nature.

In a comment on the end of the second chapter of Paul’s letter to the Hebrews, Theodoret presents an important soteriological summary. His comment confirms the

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<sup>500</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 688. Trans. Hill, 143.

conception that the Ruler Christ in person was passible and that he really accepted the role of a mortal man. Theodoret reproduces Paul's text, stressing that in no way does Christ the Lord take hold of angels: it is Abraham's seed that he takes hold of. Hence he had to become like the brethren in every respect so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in what pertains to God so as to atone for the sins of the people. He was tested by what he suffered, and now he is able to help those who are tested.<sup>501</sup>

Theodoret's interpretation follows the principle: "What God has assumed, God has saved and what God has not assumed, God has not saved".<sup>502</sup> The deification was not possible without the divine coming to and being present in humanity. Accordingly, Christ the Lord assumed the entire nature of man. There is no additional *πρόσωπον* for the man Jesus. It was like a man that he, Christ the Lord, underwent the Passion. He had to become lower than the angels in order to be mortal. Theodoret explains what would have happened if Christ the Lord had assumed the nature of angels. The divine plan would not have been fulfilled, for he would have been superior to death. The divine plan was accomplished in taking on humanity, as Paul writes that Christ did not take hold of human seed but of Abraham's seed. This taking hold of Abraham's seed refers to the promises of God. There was the plan and, according to the divine plan, God decided to become incarnate and reveal his plan beforehand through Biblical persons. When assuming a human nature, Christ the Lord became passible and mortal, capable of fulfilling the divine plan. He was able to pay humankind's debt through the Passion.

Accordingly, the Ruler Christ, in his person, was involved in human life in all other respects: he shared food with men, suffered fatigue, was downhearted, wept and eventually met his death. Theodoret explicitly attributes the subject nature to Christ's person, and he expresses God's divine Logos as located in Christ's whole person without a doubt. There is only one common *πρόσωπον* in Christ for his two natures. Having been capable of experiencing humanity, he presented his saving death as an offering. Following Paul's expression, Theodoret refers to Old Testament

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<sup>501</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 696-697. Trans. Hill, 148.

<sup>502</sup> "What God has not assumed, God has not saved". That's what Gregory of Nyssa wrote in, explaining why the church needed a strong doctrine of the incarnation. God redeems humanity by taking on humanity.

sacrifices when explaining the death of Christ the Lord. He expresses this by saying, “the body [that] he had assumed he offered for the whole of creation”.<sup>503</sup> Christ the Lord needed the capacity of humanity to fulfil the divine plan.

Theodoret also expresses the sharing of knowledge in the meaning of divine reception. The person of Christ learned from the weakness of human nature. Theodoret explains that Christ the Lord, like all men, was under Grace and under the Law. He had the same pressures as others. He is now able to understand and to assist people under attack. The involvement of the Person, Christ the Lord, in human life is profoundly expressed. In these contemplations, Theodoret confines that it is impossible to support the conception of the two subjects in Christ.

When it comes to the communication of properties between the natures, Theodoret asserts that the natures did not lose their original properties. There seems to be a paradox in his expression. The whole Person, Christ the Lord, possesses everything, both divine and human properties. With these natures, he experiences the Passion, and yet one of his two natures is not harmed or changed in the Passion. Theodoret refers to Paul’s words, “you are the same and your years will not fail”,<sup>504</sup> and sees in them an argument for Christ’s unalterable and unchangeable divine nature. He was not made, but he is, and he admits of no change, being always the same. On this basis, Theodoret confirms the concept of the impassibility of the divine nature. If the divinity were altered, it would not be the same. If the divinity had passed three days in death, its years would have failed.<sup>505</sup> Theodoret does not deny the involvement of the one subject of Christ the Lord in any human or divine experience, but he does define differences between the roles of the natures in various experiences.

There is a soteriological purpose in Theodoret’s expression of the immutability of divinity. He proceeds with this theme by citing Hebr 2.9: “by becoming man, God the Word destroyed the power of death. In destroying it he promised us resurrection, to resurrection he linked incorruptibility and immortality, and visible things will also share incorruptibility”. Christ the Lord preserved something indispensable in his

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<sup>503</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 696. Trans. Hill, 148.

<sup>504</sup> Hebr. 1:12, see *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 688. Trans. Hill, 144.

<sup>505</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 688-689. Trans. Hill, 144.

natures for the purpose of gifting it afterwards to people. In this way, Theodoret defends the rationale of deification. However, speaking of the preservation of divine abilities did not mean that the Passion would have been apparent. Theodoret cites Hebr 2.11-13: “the one who for our sakes accepted suffering is not ashamed to call brethren those for whom he endured the suffering”.<sup>506</sup> The deification did not affect the impassibility of the divine nature. Theodoret does not explicitly express any changes in the divine nature, but the deification does make changes in Christ’s human nature. The subject nature of divinity in Christ the Lord was secured, not to be affected by anything. While Theodoret defended the free will of man by distinguishing the division of people into those who are saved and who are not, he emphasizes the renewal of the whole human nature through the incarnation in such a strong manner that the subject nature of the divine Logos is unanimously presented.<sup>507</sup> Theodoret explicitly attributes the subject nature to Christ’s person, and he leaves no doubt in his expression that God’s divine Logos is located in Christ’s person.

According to Antiochian vocabulary, the common *πρόσωπον* in Christ may stand for two of his *φύσεις* (and *ὑποστάσεις*). Theodoret did not give up asserting the unbreakable union of the *πρόσωπον* (or later also the *ὑποστάσεις*) of Christ. He did, however, distance himself from the Antiochian concept of two different *πρόσωπα* for two different natures in Christ. He changed the old Antiochian concept in a way that there is only one common *πρόσωπον* in Christ. This *πρόσωπον* is also the real subject with divine authority in Christ. Theodoret’s Christology includes *communicatio idiomatum*, and this is expressed through deification and argued for in many ways. To understand Theodoret’s concept properly requires a substantial understanding on Theodoret’s method of *communicatio onomaton*.<sup>508</sup> Evaluations of

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<sup>506</sup> *Ad Hebr.*, PG 82, 693. Trans. Hill, 145-148.

<sup>507</sup> “Only the divine nature is free of need. All creation needed the remedy of incarnation [...] by doing away with death, revealing the resurrection and giving the pledge of common resurrection, dissipated that dismal cloud. By gathering together, then, he refers to the sudden transformation of things: through the dispensation of Christ the Lord, human nature revives and clothes itself in incorruptibility”. *Ad Eph.*, PG 82, 512. Trans. Hill 34-35. For more on Theodoret’s concept of *ἀνακεφαλαιώσεις*, see the Introduction of *CPL*, Hill, Theodoret 2001c, 11.

<sup>508</sup> There is a clear process in Theodoret’s Christological presentation in his Commentary on the Pauline Letters. I have seen it necessary within the requirements of my study to evaluate his achievements in the light of his mature doctrine, not in the light of his early and rough Antiochian two-part Christology. If the standpoint is not to accept real development in his Christology, it is natural to agree with Clayton in saying that two subjects remain at the end in Theodoret’s Christology.

Theodoret's doctrine of *communicatio onomaton* have been taken in opposite ways. It has been evaluated either as something *πρόσωπικ* (apparent) and nominal or, as has been done in my study, it has been understood to confirm substantial unions in Christ representing a real union in one subject, the Ruler Christ. According to the opposite view, it has been claimed that Theodoret's Christological method is to leave the two subjects separate, the human and the divine subjects in Christ. In Theodoret's *Commentary on the Pauline Letters*, the method of unifying nomenclature works on a substantial level. It leads to results that are possible to evaluate in order to define the concept of *communicatio idiomatum* on the level that the Antiochians could ultimately accept.<sup>509</sup> Theodoret's Antiochian tradition served the unaltered union of the *πρόσωπον*, the *ὑποστάσις* and the *φύσις*. When Theodoret defines Christ's *πρόσωπον* as the common *πρόσωπον* of both natures of Christ in connection to *communicatio onomaton*, substantially, the *communicatio idiomatum* of the natures is also presented in Christ's person i.e. in the *πρόσωπον*. According to the divine plan, the divine nature is not thought to be only present, but is seen as the acting subject in *οἰκονόμια*, the very purpose of which is to execute the deification of human nature. For Theodoret, the real subject of *oikonomia*, according to the divine

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See Clayton 2007, 286. On the contrary to the main claim of Clayton, he also accepts another concept in a narrower view: if the expressions of Theodoret's "mature Christology" are taken as they are written, without taking young Theodoret into account, it is possible to see one divine subject in Theodoret's Christology. Clayton also admits that, in reference to Bertram, the standpoints are quite different when the source material is mainly taken from *CPL*. See Clayton 2007, 39. Young, in reference to many modern scholars, contends that it is possible to say that Theodoret began as a Nestorian two subject theologian but changed his position in the course of time, the change occurring at the time of the council of Chalcedon or before. Young 1983, 271. Pihkala who also professed to the ontological change in Theodoret's understanding. This study agrees with him in seeing this change as the fruit of theological evolution. In the form that it is eventually presented by Theodoret, the *πρόσωπον* of the Logos is precisely the person of Christ. Accordingly, this simply represents Theodoret on the orthodox way to Chalcedon. Pihkala evaluates Theodoret's and the Antiochians' Christology as basically being like Alexandrian Christology, "Christology from above", in spite of their profound interest in human nature. Both Theodoret's and the Antiochians' Christologies are divinity directed, and the divine nature is the overwhelming nature. Pihkala 2004, 248-255.

Grillmeier argues for evolution in Theodoret's Christology, yet within the limits of the traditional Antiochian conception. He asserts that Theodoret was able to give the subject nature to the *πρόσωπον* in Christ. However, though the common subject in Theodoret's Christology, according to Grillmeier, may be Christ, it is not the Logos. Grillmeier asserts that Theodoret cannot identify two different categories of expressions: "first that which ascribes something of the Logos as the possessive and effective subject and the other which ascribes something of the Logos as of his essential nature". Only in his later works was he able to overcome this weakness. This is not evident until the two letters written in 449, which Grillmeier sets as the last stage in Theodoret's evolution toward complete and deeper meaning of *πρόσωπον*. Grillmeier 1975, 488-495. In this study, I have come to the conviction that Theodoret, already in his *CPL*, fully presents the subject nature of the divine Logos according to the Ruler Christ's execution of the divine plan.

<sup>509</sup> See Clayton 2007, 206-207, 284-288 and Pásztori-Kupán 2006, 44-45.

plan, is the divine Logos, called most commonly in his Commentaries on the Pauline Letters as “Christ the Lord” or “the Ruler Christ”.<sup>510</sup>

## 6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, in his Commentary on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret unanimously presents God as eternal, immutable and impassible. The divine attributes are equally shared between all persons of the Trinity. All three, the “Father”, the “Only Begotten Son” and the “Holy Spirit”, have the same universal divine nature. The divine nature cannot be altered or affected. Accordingly, all limitations of time and alterations, which are real and substantial in Christ, do belong to the universal human nature of Christ. Theodoret does not accept any expression of God that presents Him as impassible in any of the stages of salvation history. According to Theodoret, it would insult the orthodox faith to assert anything else. The axiom of divine impassibility (*ἀπάθεια*) is safeguarded especially in Theodoret’s doctrine of “two-nature Christology”. All passibility is to be attributed to human nature.

Theodoret accepts that God and his divine nature have strong feelings and an ontological presence in human life and even in the passion. It is ensured that God is the subject, not the object, of participation in human experiences, and he suffers no harm even though he participates in the suffering of sacrifice. Being the only subject annuls the possibility of being affected by someone else or being bound to any limitation of time. Subjectivity is totally insured with God’s divine plan of *oikonomia* for deification, which prevails from eternity to eternity. The emotions of God mentioned in the Bible and the foreknowledge of the assumption of human nature have eternally been in God’s mind. God does have feelings, which are in line with his graceful plan and are in total control of God. All human emotions are not “in practice” in God’s mind. He is capable of practicing them, but he has sealed some of them, such as his hatred, to wait for the proper time to experience them. The divine

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<sup>510</sup> *The Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul* is dated by scholars between the years 435-448. For an in-depth discussion on the dating, see the Introduction of the Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul, Hill 2-3. The results of this study confirm the dating to be as late as possible, for Theodoret’s Christological structure and presentation developed to be similar to a Chalcedonian type of presentation.

plan is executed with perfect timing, just as it was planned to be done. Thus, God is purposefully and substantially present in the passion, while remaining eternal, immutable and impassible.

In this study, I first analysed Theodoret's terminology and the method of his exegesis in order to be able to present his doctrine of the Trinity and of the Christology properly in his work on the Pauline Letters. Theodoret inherited his Trinitarian terms and the orthodox Trinitarian doctrine from the Cappadocian Fathers. In accordance with each other and with Theodoret, they also taught that there is one nature *οὐσία* / *φύσις* and three persons *πρόσωπα* / *ὑποστάσεις* in God. Theodoret did not consider *ὑποστάσεις* to be an equal synonym of *πρόσωπον* until the council of Chalcedon. According to the Cappadocian tradition, Theodoret used the terms *οὐσία* and *φύσις* consistently as synonyms in his Trinitarian (and also in his Christological) expressions. He asserts that the three *ὑποστάσεις* in the Triad are in total equality because the divine persons are equal in nature. The particular properties of each divine person (*ἰδιότης*) are contained by their *ὑποστάσεις* or *πρόσωπον*. The divine nature is totally opposite to human nature. The divine nature in Theodoret's orthodox faith had the attributes of being timeless, uncreated, omnipotent, incorporeal, infinite, immutable and impassible.

When moving on to the Christological structure and the concept of divine impassibility, the terms needed to be defined are even more detailed. I analysed Theodoret's Antiochian terms, taking also note of his predecessors' methods of using the terms. In the Antiochian tradition, it was seen necessary to express the very essence of a man or God in terms of a three-part concept. Every personal identification needs to start with a universal nature. Everyone has one kind of universal nature (*φύσις*), which is generally either divine or human in theological terms. The particular nature is located in one's personal ground (*ὑποστάσεις*). The individual properties (*ἰδιόμυς*) of the individual are located in this nature. Both the universal *φύσις* and the individual *ἰδιόμυς* in the *ὑποστάσεις* need to be identified through a third entity, *πρόσωπον*, to have the personal identification completed. The existence of the universal and particular natures needs the *πρόσωπον* in order to have a common appearance and to communicate on the same level. In Antiochian



theology, and in the former works of Theodoret, another kind of *πρόσωπον* may also be found. This is common ground for the two separate *πρόσωπα* of the divine and human natures. In his commentary on the Pauline Letters, Theodoret already identified the Chalkedonian way to give up other definitions for the sake of unity in Christ rather than unity in one person (*πρόσωπον*) with two natures (*φύσεις*).

When presenting Theodoret's Christology, I have paid attention to the change in his Christological presentation between his former doctrinal works of *De Trinitate* and *De Incarnatione* and his later works. Inside the doctrine of "two nature Christology" of the Antiochians, the two-part image of *λόγος - ἄνθρωπος* has changed to be more like the Alexandrian subject *λόγος - σάρξ*-presentation. In a former presentation of *De Incarnatione*, Theodoret emphasized that the Logos had assumed the 'perfect man' with his soul and body (*οὐ σάρκα μόνῃν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχὴν ἀνείληφεν αὐτὸν Θεὸν λόγον ὁμολογήσαμεν*). In later expressions in his commentaries, Theodoret emphasises that there are, after the assumption, two perfect natures (*δύο φύσεις*) in Christ. The one, which was assumed, was the human nature (or humanity). The cornerstone of Theodoret's Christology is salvation history according to God's divine plan. All through Theodoret has presented his Christology as a derivation of God's philanthropy.

*ἀπάθεια*

In order to understand Theodoret's Christology and the concept of *ἀπάθεια* in a Christological context with the dimension of the *communicatio idiomatum*, it is essential to remember that Theodoret also had a two-part conception that the "*φύσις* always belongs together with its *ὑποστάσις*". The communicable part in every person is the third level, the *πρόσωπον*. It is only on this level that the unions and communication of properties can take place. For theodoret, the *πρόσωπον* is always an ontological expression. It is not something apparent, such as giving a face to something, but an ontological being itself, consisting of both its basis and its properties, according to one's universal and individual properties. This terminology supports the doctrine of the impassible presence of the divinity in human acts.

My study indicates that Theodoret inherited his exegetical method mainly from his Antiochian predecessors, such as Theodore of Mopsuestia. Theodoret, who was

deeply loyal to his tradition, also favoured a strict literal interpretation of the Scriptures. The literal meaning is preferred to allegory and typology. However, these two methods are used if, on the one hand, there is a certain incentive to do so in the text or if, on the other hand, Theodoret sees an opportunity to defend his doctrinal aims by departing from a literal interpretation. In his Biblical work, Theodoret took a big step in promoting the interactive working method when reading different Biblical passages. He developed Antiochian exegesis in the direction of emphasizing the consistency of Scripture as a whole. He gave up the radical distinction between the Old and New testaments. Unlike Theodor, he perceives a fundamental unity in all Scripture. By this means, he attains a wider range of expressions on Divine impassibility and is able to describe the impassible Christ as present, both in the sayings of Old Testament and the sayings of New Testament.

The most brilliant exegetical method that Theodoret uses to insure both the unity and duality of Christ is the communication of names. By this method, he can explain ontological unions while preserving the particular attributes of the natures. If the “Divine Scripture” attests different descriptions or names in association with one of the persons of Triad, then those expressions may always be understood to belong together. Both sides of the expression are always valid to represent the whole entity on their own in other passages. By the communication of names, Theodoret expresses the divine presence in his Christology. By unifying nomenclature, Theodoret defines the ontological presence while preserving the unaltered essences of the natures. For Theodoret, the communication of names is also a means to express the communication of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*) without insulting God’s eternity, immutability and impassibility.

In the third chapter, I presented Theodoret’s Trinitarian concept in the light of his unambiguous emphasis on the eternal immutability of the divine nature. In order to understand the relationship of God and Christ when it comes to the divine presence in human life, it was necessary to clarify this relationship. Theodoret established his Antiochian concept of one φύσις with three ὑποστάσεις in his former work *De Trinitate*. The divine φύσις necessitates eternity, immutability and impassibility. In his commentary on the Pauline letters, Theodoret proceeds with the same conception,

clarifying it further in order to present important axioms for Christological understanding. He emphasizes immutability by saying that not even the Father-Son relationship can ever break the eternity of the divine nature (φύσις). The Father he has always been and will always be the Father. He has no beginning, for age or change do not exist in Him. He is by his universal nature the Father (φύσει Πατήρ). Yet, the notion that there is no beginning of fatherhood does not mean that it would be something nominal. Theodoret asserts that God is properly the Father and truly God the Father (Κυρίως Πατήρ καὶ ἀλητὸς Πατήρ ὁ Θεός). On the one hand, the idea that he is God the Father establishes him as the Father with eternality and immutability.

Theodoret proceeds with his Biblical exegesis, especially using the method of communication of names to define the equal position of the Son in the Trinity. The Son also shares the same eternal, immutable and impassible divine nature with Father. Consequently, the existence of the Son is co-eternal (συναιδίδιος) with his Begetter. The Son's existence also does not have a beginning, and it is eternal. Therefore, the Father and the Son exist inseparably without any limitations of time. This is confirmed by their Biblical names and calling. Theodoret evaluates these sayings to be so clear that, if the eternity of the Son were denied, then the eternity of the Father would be denied as well. It is not possible to place a certain time period or aeon between the Father and the Son. This would be impossible since the ages were also created by the Son. Thus, the names of God and Son are properly used as interchangeable subjects in all Biblical sayings. However, quite to the contrary, the beginning of the man Jesus Christ, the First Born, does exist. As I presented in the chapter concerning the human nature of Christ, Christ is always involved in his humanity. Still, God's divine plan is constantly being fulfilled. There is no need to change the title of the subject at any stage, no matter what the context is, either human or divine. The unifying nomenclature forms the inseparable union of the natures and the union of the ages.

Theodoret also defends the eternality and immutability of the third person of the Trinity. By Biblical argument, he presents the whole Bible with all its writings as *Θεὸς πνεῦστος*, which means that the grace working in the scriptures is of the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit (*πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον*). After ascribing authority,

defining terms and presenting many arguments by the communication of names, Theodoret concludes that “the Holy Spirit is God” (Θεὸς τοίνυν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). The name “Θεὸς πνεῦστος” is, according to Theodoret’s communication of names, authoritative enough to define the ontological unity so as to complete the Trinity.

The divine nature in all three persons executes the divine plan with eternal love. Impassibility, as lacking emotions, is not to be found in Theodoret’s doctrines. For love, God volunteers to be present in human life, even in the Passion. The eternal divine plan is not mutable, for it is not possible to affect it in any way by ages or by human beings. This is because God saw the decisions and the faith of men beforehand, though men always have free will. The divine nature is invisible and impassible, and that is why it needed human nature to execute the plan, which necessitated a limitation of time, mutability and passibility.

Theodoret posits that the Word of God (Λόγος), the Second Person of God, was constantly the acting subject in oikonomia and especially in the incarnation. Theodoret began using this expression at the time of his *Commentary on the Pauline Letters*. He distanced himself from the Antiochian emphasis on the subject nature of Christ’s humanity in all his human experiences. The divine nature was not only an educator and supporter but the leading subject. The Λόγος worked in the person of Christ as his divine nature, assuming the human nature. The divine nature dominated the whole inhumanation and remained immutable with all its divine properties in the process. Accordingly, the human nature, while being mutable and affected, also preserved its humanity. This definition refutes all possibilities of mixture: the two natures of Christ, without deification, would have been completely different according to their properties. Theodoret also refutes separation: the natures are united in the person (πρόσωπον) of Christ. There may be changes in the person, but they concern the human nature exclusively. All statements of “becoming” must be addressed to the human nature, as the opposite statements of “being” pertain to the divine nature. In spite of a clear difference between the properties of manhood and of the Godhead in Christ, Theodoret explicitly refutes the possibility of two different subjects, which the Nestorians had accepted. Differing from Nestorius, Theodoret

asserts that, in his authoritative person, Christ (*the Ruler Christ*) is seen as both human and divine i.e. passible and impassible.

Theodoret deems it natural, within the practice of the “communication of names”, to attribute human experiences to the human nature and divine experiences to the divine nature, although at first glance this would seem to necessitate two different subjects. Theodoret relies on the possibility of the part to represent the whole. “The God Word”, the divine nature, was the active subject that assumed the human nature, guided it, performed miracles and executed the resurrection. Similarly, it is possible to see the human nature as active in Christ’s human acts, though within the limits that were set for it. The human nature had a free will, yet it received good guidance from the divinity. Concerning God’s impassibility, it is important to note that Theodoret did not accept any mixture between the natures. He emphasizes that God always remains in his nature and man always remains in his nature.

In this study, I have presented six arguments by which Theodoret defines the *divine impassibility of Christ* in passible actions. With the same arguments, he also expresses the substantial *divine presence* in passible actions. The first important argument is his soteriological presentation of “the divine plan” (*οἰκονόμια*). The divine plan, according to Theodoret’s exegetical work, is the combination of his doctrinal presentation of the Trinity and Christology. Theodoret presents a Chalcedonian type of definition of the two natures in one person as the basis of his exegesis in his *Commentary on the Pauline Letters*. The divine nature originated from God, being immutable and impassible eternally. However, the divine *οἰκονόμια*, which originates from God’s eternal love, cannot be executed without the real presence of God in human life. The human nature of Christ originates from the Virgin Mary and has all human properties. Theodoret’s three-part conception of “*φύσις – ὑποστάσις – πρόσωπον*” of each divine and human being developed into “*δυο φύσεις* and *δυο ὑποστάσεις* in Christ’s one *πρόσωπον* (two natures and two substances in Christ’s one person). The *ὑποστάσεις* are not any kind of persons like the *πρόσωπον*, but the individual grounds for the universal *φύσις*. Only the *πρόσωπον* is capable of communicating with the other persons. Theodoret is also able to describe the *Λόγος* as the subject in Christ’s human life through God’s eternal

οἰκονόμια. It is impossible to deny the divine presence from any stage in the incarnation since the Λόγος is active in all of its stages. The Ruler Christ executes his eternal divine plan. There is no alternative to understanding how God is affected in any stage of salvation history.

Another argument for the impassible divine presence in passibility is Theodoret's concept of a special kind of free will in Christ's human nature. Theodoret insists on man's free will to make choices. He attributes unlimited freedom to all men to choose good and bad. They also have the capability to practice their choices. He refutes predestination. However, men are not capable of practicing God's will without his assistance. In addition, according to "the divine plan", eternal life should always be seen as God's gift to man. Christ the Lord fulfilled extreme righteousness and healed the entire human race, saving all mankind. Now, people are able to receive gifts from God even in this world. After their resurrection, they will have imperishableness and immortality, and grace will reign over them. The human nature of Christ had free will as well as the capability to execute its decisions. However, the free will of Christ's humanity was not challenged in the same way as the free will other men are. This is because Christ had a different "mindset". The presence of the divine nature was not without effects. The divine nature was not in danger of being affected, for the free will of Christ's human nature was under the control of God's "mindset". The divine nature had to be present in human life in order to be able to give assistance with a sound "mindset".

Theodoret also argues for God's ontological presence in human life by the method of *communicatio onomaton*. Through nomenclature, Theodoret asserts the full presence of Christ, *i.e.* the whole πρόσωπον (Ruler Christ), in every stage of the "divine plan". In the Biblical text, the name of the person of Christ always represents both of his natures, and both natures represent the person. In his commentary on Romans, Theodoret asserts that the Ruler Christ, with God, continuously executes God's divine plan. Accordingly, both human and divine experiences necessarily pertain to God. However, the Ruler Christ had different names, which indicate his position at different stages of Salvation history. When speaking of pre-existent Christ, he is called "God the Word" (ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος), which indicates that he is God and God by his divine nature (Θεὸς γὰρ ὦν καὶ φύσει Θεὸς) with full equality with him. For

Theodoret, being in the form of God (*μορφή τοῦ Θεοῦ*) is a synonymous expression to having the same substance with God (*οὐσία τοῦ Θεοῦ*). Vice versa, becoming the form of a man (to be called a man) means to have the same substance as men do. Through names, Theodoret underlines a vivid presentation of Christ's emotions and passions in the Bible, not denying the special properties of the different natures.

Theodoret also sacramentally argues for the presence of Christ's divinity in human life. People could see Christ in his human appearances, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, growing weary, having passions and being crucified. It is like the Eucharist in which people see the bread and the wine as the visible marks of Christ being present. Still, people also believe that the marks really are what they appear to be. Christ as a whole was seen in Christ's human nature. Theodoret clarified the character of the divine presence with three kinds of roles of Christ in his sacrifice. The Christ is at the same time the one who offers the sacrifice, the one who receives the sacrifice and the one who is the sacrifice. This kind of multidimensional presence is the impassible divine presence in passibility. The human appearance of Christ is much more than it seems to be.

Theodoret also saw it necessary to build a special kind of typological image in order to clarify his concept of the divine presence in the passion. He makes this clarification when discussing Hebrews chapter nine. He takes up the words "the blood of the covenant".<sup>511</sup> He interprets the words with passages concerning the Old Testament's mercy seat. In order to have enough source material, he also refers to the sacrifice that is ordained in Num 19. In this passage, God gives instructions to Moses and Aaron concerning the sacrifice, and ordained the purification of water for people who were unclean. There were several materials involved in the sacrifice that Theodoret analyses in his exegesis. He appoints them to their positions as types and archetypes. The water was a type of baptism, the blood of brute beasts represented the saving blood, the heat of the hyssop stood for the grace of the divine Spirit, and the scarlet wool represented the new garment. After this, Theodoret proceeds to his point and contends that "a piece of cedar" (being wood that does not rot) represented "the impassible divinity", while the "ashes of a heifer" stood for "the suffering of

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<sup>511</sup> Hebr. 9:18-22.

humanity”. Theodoret’s typological message results in the following observations: first, the ashes of the heifer and the suffering of Christ’s humanity both shared a cruel destiny; second, the piece of cedar wood was ordered to be taken and thrown into the fire with hyssop and scarlet. Theodoret said that the cedar was chosen as the type of its archetype, the divine impassibility. The reason why it was suitable is that cedar does not rot. Theodoret chose the material that was durable in its nature. Still, he did not choose material such as stone or bronze, which the presence in the sacrifice would not have harmed. According to this type, the divine nature has the possibility to avoid damage in its very nature, yet it was absolutely involved in the sacrifice.

Argumentation on the doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum*, which is an important measure of how the divinity can take part in passibility, is found in Theodoret’s doctrine of deification (*θέωσις*). In his soteriology, the ultimate goal of salvation is deification. This is a process by which the Ruler Christ gifts his divine properties to his own human nature and, subsequently, to the members of the Church, “the first” among people. Deification necessitates *communicatio idiomatum*. Christ the Lord, in his divine nature, was the Creator who gave existence to the human nature and to all people. In the incarnation, the Ruler Christ is, for the second time, the Creator in his divine nature, for he renews the human nature. According to the divine plan, Christ, in his divine nature, was also involved in the Passion. Through the divine works of love, people are able to be among “the first” and to be over the angels. People also receive the knowledge that joins them to God. In the resurrection, Christ’s divine nature gifts all divine properties to the human nature and takes the position over all the angels. There is a mystery in deification since God joins heavenly things to earthly things. On the basis of Theodoret’s description of the deification, it is possible to see the communication of properties (*communicatio idiomatum*) in his Christology. Divine properties are passed to the human nature. Deification breaks the boundary between the natures. However, this process did not affect the divine nature in any way, for there was no change in the divine nature in all the humanation (*kenôsis*) of Christ. The deification did not harm the impassibility of the divine nature. Theodoret does not hint at any changes in divine nature, but he does describe how the deification result in changes in Christ’s human nature. The authority and the subject nature of divinity in Christ the Lord secured the complete impassibility of the



divine nature. Theodoret explicitly locates both the subject nature and God's divine *Logos* in Christ's person. Expressed in Antiochian vocabulary, this can be expressed as the common *πρόσωπον* of both the impassible and the passible natures in Christ.

## 7. ABBREVIATIONS

|              |                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACO          | <i>Acta Conciliorum Occumenicorum.</i>                                                                                                              |
| Ad Pauli.    | <i>Praefatio Theodreti in Epistolas Pauli</i> – PG 82, col. 35.                                                                                     |
| Ad Rom.      | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Romanos</i> -- PG 82, col. 43.                                                                                        |
| Ad I Cor.    | <i>Interpretatio epistolae I ad Corinthios</i> -- PG 82, col. 226.                                                                                  |
| Ad II Cor.   | <i>Interpretatio epistolae II ad Corinthios</i> -- PG 82, col. 375.                                                                                 |
| Ad Gal.      | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Galatas</i> -- PG 82, col. 459.                                                                                       |
| Ad Eph.      | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Ephesios</i> -- PG 82, col. 506.                                                                                      |
| Ad Phil.     | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Philippenses</i> -- PG 82, col. 558.                                                                                  |
| Ad Col.      | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Colossenses</i> -- PG 82, col. 591.                                                                                   |
| Ad I Thes.   | <i>Interpretatio epistolae I ad Thessalonicenses</i> -- PG 82, col. 627.                                                                            |
| Ad I Thes.   | <i>Interpretatio epistolae II ad Thessalonicenses</i> -- PG 82, col. 658.                                                                           |
| Ad Hebr.     | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Hebraeos</i> -- PG 82, col. 674.                                                                                      |
| Ad I Tim.    | <i>Interpretatio epistolae I ad Timotheum</i> -- PG 82, col. 787.                                                                                   |
| Ad II Tim.   | <i>Interpretatio epistolae II ad Timotheum</i> -- PG 82, col. 831.                                                                                  |
| Ad Tat.      | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Tatum</i> -- PG 82, col. 858.                                                                                         |
| Ad Phile.    | <i>Interpretatio epistolae ad Philemonem</i> -- PG 82, col. 871.                                                                                    |
| Canticum     | Gregory of Nyssa, <i>In Canticum Canticorum.</i>                                                                                                    |
| City of God  | Augustine, <i>City of God and Christian Doctrine.</i>                                                                                               |
| CPL          | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentary on the Letters of St. Paul.</i>                                                                                   |
| Divine Prov. | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>On Divine Providence.</i>                                                                                                    |
| Eccl.        | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>The Ecclesiastical History.</i>                                                                                              |
| Eranistes    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Eranistes.</i>                                                                                                               |
| II Eranistes | <i>Eranistes</i> , Critical text and prolegomena                                                                                                    |
| Ethical T.   | Plotinus, <i>The Ethical Treatises Vol. I.</i>                                                                                                      |
| Incarnatione | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>De Incarnatione.</i>                                                                                                         |
| JTS          | <i>Journal of Theological Studies.</i>                                                                                                              |
| LM           | Epicurus, <i>The Letter to Menoeceus.</i>                                                                                                           |
| L.S.         | Long and Sedley.                                                                                                                                    |
| Metaphysics  | Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics.</i>                                                                                                                      |
| Morals       | Seneca, <i>Morals.</i>                                                                                                                              |
| Phaedrius    | Plato, <i>Phaedrius.</i>                                                                                                                            |
| Philebus     | Plato, <i>Philebus.</i>                                                                                                                             |
| On Psalms    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentary on the Psalms 1-72.</i>                                                                                           |
| On Psalms II | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentary on the Psalms 73-150.</i>                                                                                         |
| Refutatio    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Refutation of Cyril's Anathemas.</i>                                                                                         |
| Rhetoric     | Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric.</i>                                                                                                                         |
| On S.S.      | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentary on Song of Songs</i> , 2 vols.                                                                                    |
| Stromata     | Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromata.</i>                                                                                                             |
| Trinitate    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>De Trinitate.</i>                                                                                                            |
| On Ezekiel   | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentaries on the Prophets, Volume two.</i><br><i>Commentary on the Prophet Ezekiel.</i>                                   |
| On Dan.      | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentary on Daniel.</i>                                                                                                    |
| On Oct.I     | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>The Questions on the Octateuch, Vol.1.</i>                                                                                   |
| On Oct.II    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>The Questions on the Octateuch, Vol.2.</i>                                                                                   |
| On Prof.I    | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentaries on the Prophets, Volume One.</i>                                                                                |
| On Prof.III  | Theodoret of Cyrus, <i>Commentaries on the Prophets, Volume Three.</i>                                                                              |
| PG           | <i>Patrologiae Graecae, Patrologiae Graecae</i> , J.-P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus (series Graeca) (MPG)</i> , Paris: Migne, 1857-1866. |
| SC           | <i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>                                                                                                                          |

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